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MADAME RECAMIER

FROM THE FRENCH OF

EDOUARD HERRIOT

BY

ALYS HALLARD

With Fifteen Portraits in Photogravure

VOL. II

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1906

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BALLANCHE took the place that Constant had wished for in Mme. Récamier's affections. Constant very quickly recognized that in this modest philosopher he had found a more formidable rival than such men as Nadaillac and Forbin. "I may only be your friend and I only ask for that," he writes in February, 1815. "I ask for a place like that of M. Ballanche."¹ A few months later he adds this phrase to his grievances : "When M. Ballanche has been hurt or distressed in his mind by you, you want an explanation ; why am I not M. Ballanche for you ?"² It will easily be understood that Mme. Récamier did not hesitate in her choice. What Constant had to offer her, as Chateaubriand in a picturesque way expresses it, was the remainder of a "melancholy life stripped of its bloom,"³ the last ardours of a soul wearied by countless agitations and an unstable and uncertain affection. Ballanche had consecrated to her, with the first-fruits of his talent, an affection full of innocence and candour. As Sainte-Beuve has so well

¹ *Lettres. . .* p. 124.

² *Ibid.*, p. 233.

³ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 458.

explained,¹ the year 1814 had a decisive influence over men of Ballanche's temperament ; it marked for them deliverance and the commencement of a new time. Hitherto the charming Lyonee dreamer had not found his formula. "That enigma, which for more than ten years, without his knowing it, had been making him suffer, was elucidated for him in the universal agitation. The formidable sphinx of 1815, by proposing afresh the fateful question, completely confirmed the answer in the mind of the sage ; 1814 or 1815 was veritably for M. Ballanche the decisive year, the great climacteric year of his life, the effective moment of the *initiation* ; according to his own words, it was "the hour when, passing the boundary of individual sentiments and the pleasant divagation of his reveries, he embraced the sphere of human development and a whole order of social ideas, of which he became the harmonious and gentle hierophant."

We can follow this progressive evolution of the genius of Ballanche, thanks to his letters to Mme. Récamier. At the very moment when the Restoration revealed to him fresh ideas on history, the persuasive influence of Juliette, the delight that he felt in her society, brought him gradually to evolve that idea from which sprang the *Essai sur les institutions sociales dans leur rapport avec les idées nouvelles* (Essay on social institutions in their relation to the new ideas). The intercourse of Ballanche and his friend is therefore not to be jeered at. Etienne Delécluze, who, in his recently published *Souvenirs*, represents Mme. Récamier as Louise, has endeavoured to render this intimacy ridiculous. He points out as a strange thing,² "the sort of respectful kindness of Louise at all hours of the day for that poor Ballanche, who, ugly, dirty, and ridiculously dressed, had become almost imbecile in consequence of his subtilized Platonic love, and who was gradually wearing himself out by worshipping her constantly, as one does an idol that one fears and adores." The philosopher's letters will show us what to think of the appreciation of Delécluze.

Ballanche spent some weeks in Paris during the summer of

¹ *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 1 and following.

² See *Revue rétrospective*, 1888, IX, 2, p. 14 and following.

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1815. He was, as Mme. Lenormant tells us,¹ introduced by Mme. Récamier to all the persons in her society, who only gradually became accustomed to the ways of this most singular philosopher. He himself was reserved, owing to that kind of dejection to which he frequently refers; his judgment of certain persons was severe, and he explains this to Mme. Récamier in a letter written on his return to Lyons, September 30th, 1815. He also communicates to her his political opinions, in which he slightly differs from Camille Jordan. "Now," he says, "my anxiety begins once more for our poor country. The great obstacle to repose for her lies in her vanity and egoism. Tell me where there is any devotion and what has become of all generous sentiments. What a future! I am very much afraid that evil will be seen where it does not exist.

"I saw Camille yesterday. His ideas and opinions are still those which I regretted so much last winter. I do not blame them, as you know, in themselves; I blame them when they lead to restlessness and a certain spirit of faction. These ideas and opinions can do no harm when they are in wise minds, but they do very much harm when they are elsewhere. And wise minds are very rare. *You have too good an opinion of our French people of to-day*, and that is one of Camille's mistakes too. You would agree with each other perfectly. I think that if you were to be more severe in your judgment of the men of our times, and particularly of the men of the Revolution, you would be much nearer the truth. You have, it seems to me, had many deceptions; do not these deceptions enlighten you? I think Camille has been weak on this occasion. He ought to wish to be a deputy and to behave accordingly. Every man owes himself to his country and to his opinions. I should have been delighted if he had been led to go to Paris, as I think Paris is necessary for him. He has friends there, and he needs friends for the development of his faculties. If there are only dishonest people, men with no

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 291. "Is the author of *Antigone* still in Paris? He is languishing with love for the most beautiful and best of women." Unpublished letter from the Duchesse de Luynes, dated April 1, 1815. M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.

moral sentiment, to write on liberal ideas, it is not the way to give these ideas any prestige. Camille, in that respect, would be very useful to this cause, and he might give a moral direction to these ideas, which is what is to be desired above everything.”¹

As a matter of fact, the silence and reserve of Ballanche, during his stay in Paris, had perhaps other causes than his discouragement and what he called his “instinctive antipathies.” He had been very much affected by this renewed intimacy with Mme. Récamier, and when the moment came to leave her, although he had fixed the date of his departure, his will gave way and he could not bear to go. The trace of his emotion and of his hesitations is to be seen in a letter intended for Juliette, but which, according to a note by Mme. Lenormant, was not sent to her.

“I would give all I have in the world for twenty-four hours more in Paris. There are things which we have not said and which we would say. It seems to me that it is for both of us to settle our destiny. Why were we not alone for an instant yesterday evening? There were accents in your voice such as I have not heard since I have been in Paris. I wanted to reply, but we were not alone. Tell me why all these days we have said nothing to each other. You were absent-minded when I was suffering, and I was suffering in a solitude that distressed me. I felt as though I had been abandoned. I feared a farewell, because I feared something final in that farewell. You are my life itself, and yesterday I understood that I was more in your heart than I had dared to hope. A single sound of your voice yesterday dispersed all my sorrows. Several times you have been good enough to offer to be my future and the object of my life. Alas, I did not dare to accept this, although it is all that I desire. I thought it was out of kindness that you spoke, that kindness which you extend to everyone and which you know so well how to measure to everyone’s requirements. I am

¹ Unpublished fragment of a letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. Address, Mme. Récamier, Rue Basse du Rempart 32, Paris. The end of this letter is published by Mme. Lenormant, *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 291 and following.

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needy, but very proud, and I fear you thought me so. But forgive me ; it would be so sweet to be loved by you that it is permissible to long for it with all one's soul and with all one's faculties. Raise me to yourself. Words that say nothing are not for you ; tell me why you say such words and why you allow them to be said to you. It is that which either deceives or distresses one.”¹

In spite of the charm of his confidence and the delicacy of this confession, Ballanche was wise not to send this letter and, since Mme. Récamier offered “to be his future,” he was happily inspired to interpret these words with reserve. This wisdom permitted him to remain during thirty years Juliette’s tender friend and the affectionate counsellor of every day. From henceforth one idea took possession of him—to leave Lyons and settle in Paris.

In his native city Ballanche endeavoured to live as a hermit, “like a savage,” with his father and sister. He saw Camille Jordan rarely, and he “was getting musty from provincial life.” He commenced a work on poetry, but could not get up his interest in it. He envied his friend, the Hellenist, Dugas-Montbel, who had just published, in 1815, his translation of the “Iliad,” and for whom study sufficed.² He wanted news all the time, and when he did not get any he became anxious. “Your extreme tolerance, which makes you respect all opinions and forgive a great many deeds which you consider evil, must expose you often and more than ever to keen anxiety.”³ Differences of opinion had certainly reached a climax ; but at Lyons, too, Ballanche could feel the difficulty of a conciliation and the necessity for tolerance. He wrote himself as follows : “Political discussions weigh on me. I even abstain from arguing because I do not know any opinion that suits me. I have decided to be a reed and to bend ; that annoys me, but less anyhow than to argue.”⁴ The *poor man*,

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. No date. Address, Mme. Recamier, Rue Basse du Rempart, No. 32. In one of Ballanche’s letters dated January 22, 1816, he says, “I have written you several letters which I have not sent.”

² Unpublished letter of November 8, 1815. M. Ch. de Loménie’s MSS.

³ Unpublished letter of November 30, 1815. M. Ch. de Loménie’s MSS.

⁴ Letter of January 22, 1816. Mme. Lenormant has published part of this. See *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 296 and following.

as he liked to call himself, suffered at not being able to settle down. He was only invariable on one point. The happiness of Mme. Récamier had to enter into the composition, if not of his happiness, at any rate of his tranquillity.

We cannot go into the details of the family troubles which complicated Ballanche's situation still more, put more bitterness into his life, and delayed him in his hopes of rejoining Mme. Récamier. What interests us, on the contrary, and makes us grasp the idea of this philosopher, who was so often obscure, is to follow him in the commentaries he makes on the criticisms provoked by his *Antigone*.

The newspapers had praised him more than once. Mme. Récamier had at once congratulated him, but with a sincerity which helps us to understand his work. Ballanche felt himself obliged to do for his friend what he would certainly not have done for anyone else, namely, answer the criticisms about himself. One of the qualities of Ballanche, when he consents to let himself go, is absolute frankness. He then accepts the praise that he believes he deserves, refuses that of which he believes himself unworthy, or which he considers exaggerated, and even claims that which he thinks has been overlooked, and which he deems his due.

Nodier's criticisms had more particularly affected him, and he discusses them at length.¹

“. . . Nodier praises me for having placed the death of Oedipus on the Cithæron ; he is quite right, but he has very justly remarked that Sophocles had good reasons for placing this catastrophe in the little town of Colona. Thus Sophocles and I had a good inspiration ; it was not necessary, then, later on to underrate Sophocles in order to show up my merit. Placing the death of Oedipus on the Cithæron was as necessary to the spirit of my composition as placing it in the town of Colona was necessary to the composition of Sophocles. Besides, without detracting from what is good in my description of the death of Oedipus, justice could be rendered

¹ Nodier's articles on *Antigone*, which were studied by Sainte-Beuve, are to be found in Vol. I of his *Mélanges de littérature et de critique*. Ballanche replies to them in the Preface to his *Antigone* (edition of his works in 6 volumes, I, p. 42 and following). These articles appeared first in the *Journal des Débats*.

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to the admirable scene by Sophocles. It would have been well to notice, too, that I always had to bring Antigone to the front, and that Sophocles was not as much obliged to do that as I was. The requirements of our compositions imposed on both of us different obligations."

"Sophocles and I." Perhaps in this expression there may have been a slight lack of modesty, but it had its excuse in that great sincerity with which Ballanche criticizes himself in his confidences to Mme. Récamier. He submits to her the entire discussion of his work ; he does not want her to miss anything. He explains to her why, as he had no model for the Sphinx scene, he had tried to treat this episode according to the genius of antiquity, whilst respecting the traditional enigma. It was in order to rid his subject of all trivialities that he chose Tiresias as narrator.¹ "As a matter of fact, Priam's Court knowing at least as much as French readers about most of these adventures, I was able to dispense with dwelling on the more well-known details, and could just run over them lightly, like a cat over cinders." Antigone, as Ballanche saw her, was one of those pure victims, free from all stain, whom the various peoples have chosen for making the doctrine of expiation felt, and this was why he could not forgive Nodier for letting himself lag behind with the old prejudice, which requires the hero of an epopee to have some moral imperfections.

Ballanche was very well treated by *Le Constitutionnel*.² The author of the article, who remained anonymous, showed up specially the advantage there may be in an author taking a well-known subject, when it is a question for him of expressing sentiments and passions. Ballanche, too, had for the most part invented his characters and his situations. He had personified in Antigone the instinct of sacrifice, which somewhat changed the old data. He had made of Oedipus not an example of fatality but the type of human misery, and he had, above all, entirely constituted the character of Hemon. It is in this, perhaps, that Ballanche was most inspired by his own personal sentiments, and was more

¹ Compare *Preface* already quoted, p. 47.

² *Preface* quoted, p. 45.

thoroughly a poet. Hemon's love, a love born in misfortune, and born through misfortune even, was a love which drew from misfortune the elements which made it durable. This conception only, in his opinion, could make of Hemon a lover worthy of Antigone. The situations, too, were new ones. Ballanche invented all Antigone's travels, and he imagined in his own way the death of his heroine and that of Hemon. The whole of it was not a work of erudition. The author denied this zealously ; it was an evocation.

In the same way Ballanche had an explanation with Mme. Récamier with regard to Malte-Brun's criticisms in *La Quotidienne*¹ and Brifaut's in the *Gazette de France*.² He commented on his sixth book, on that death which he had endeavoured to make as melodious as that of the swan, that end without distress or anguish. In this letter, as in all his works, Ballanche is, above all, desirous of the purity of the chief feature, curious of mystery, disdainful of all far-fetched phrases and effects. He says to his friend, at the end of his long and valuable commentary :—

“At present I do not doubt but that *Antigone*, in the present state, is closely united to the French language, and will last as long as that does. Everything tends to prove this to me. Another time I will justify this opinion, which I beg you to excuse like so many other things. I have contracted a habit of being sincere with you. I have nothing else to say except to beseech you not to show this letter to anyone in the world. I should be taken for a man very sure of his own things, and very difficult to please with regard to praise. But I am so anxious to be judged well by you that I step over all conventions and all reserve ; and, so that you may know my thoughts thoroughly, I will tell you with no less truth that all opinions are indifferent to me in comparison with yours, and that I would consent to see my *Antigone* disdained by the public, provided it were well received by you.”³

¹ Compare *Preface* quoted, p. 42.

² *Ibid.*, p. 43.

³ A letter from Ballanche to Mme. Récamier in 1816 shows us that he had published one of his articles, *L'Homme du destin*, in No. 112 of the *Mémorial religieux, politique et littéraire* (December 21, 1815). (Rue de l'Abbaye Saint-Germain, No. 3.)

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Just as he submitted to Mme. Récamier his literary ideas, Ballanche communicated to her his political ideas. The debates in the Chamber on the election law showed, in his opinion, the impossibility of creating institutions for a people without the help of time and of customs.¹ “The legislator never does anything but prove what exists. Therefore you see no legislative disposition at present emerge from the force of things—everything is arbitrary. Rules should only be made, then, and not laws. We French are too hasty; we always want to go out to meet time. The Revolution has destroyed the very elements of the social pact. If we were wise we should now wait for these elements to encounter each other. We should make customs for ourselves before making laws.”²

Ballanche had returned to that work which he proposed writing on poetry, to prove that all poetical laws are applicable to society. From an entirely literary discussion he would have made a political discussion emerge. But he soon stopped working on this curious subject, without, however, renouncing the idea of it. “Provided you approve,” as he wrote to his friend, “for all my thoughts turn towards you for the future, and I do not want to do anything that you would not like.”³ He was still thinking about his *Antigone*. He certainly believed in the duration of his work, and he attempted to justify this ambition by considerations, the literary interest of which is too great for us to omit them.

“Literary successes,” he says, “do not resemble each other. There are successes of fashion, of esteem, of infatuation, of party, coterie, prejudices, etc. When a new piece is given at the theatre we listen first with some distrust, particularly if it should be the author’s *début*. Gradually a murmur of approval or disapproval is to be heard. This murmur becomes contagious; it increases, gets louder, and becomes general. An opinion is suddenly formed, which is

¹ Compare Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 21.

² Unpublished letter of March 14, 1816. In our opinion the fragment No. 20 and the fragment No. 11 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s MSS. are one and the same letter. It is addressed to Madame Récamier, Rue Basse du Rempart 32, Paris.

³ Same letter.

not the opinion of anyone in particular, but of everyone. The piece is a failure, or is supported or applauded by unanimous consent. What happens in the theatre for a play happens among the public for no matter what literary production. In this case the trial and the examination take longer. The author appears before his judges one at a time. Contagious sentiments have more difficulty in spreading. See, for instance, the timidity of the first criticisms of *Antigone*. The poem in prose was examined; the antique colouring was discussed, there was no explanation given about the basis of things. Everyone was waiting until the men who lead opinion had expressed themselves. Gradually the criticisms became bolder. And I see, as the latest result, that the prejudice against poems in prose has given way. Please notice that *Télémaque* and *Les Martyrs* had not sufficed to make the prejudice give way. There is a good reason for this; it is that *Télémaque* was a moral work and not a work of poetry, and that *Les Martyrs* was based on a literary doctrine and not on a moral sentiment. All other poems in prose, without exception, have been included in a general anathema. . . . I hope some day to go to the bottom of the question with regard to the veritable boundaries of prose and poesy.

"Let us come to another point. There are two kinds of imitation, the one taken from nature, the other which has its source in the imitation of models. I think I explained to you once what I understand by imitating nature. It is, in my opinion, reproducing not nature herself, but the impressions that she gives us. The veritable imitation of the ancients consists in imitating nature as they imitated her, and not copying them. . . . See how Mme. de Staél made the climate of Italy come into her *Corinne*; see how M. de Chateaubriand brings the sights that he has seen into his books. If they have succeeded in this way, it is because they expressed the impressions that they received when they were in the climate or in presence of the sites. M. de Chateaubriand, who has everything that is necessary for an original composition, has often been led, through imitation of the ancients, to only give us a mosaic, a very beautiful one certainly, but a mosaic. In his works we meet again

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with Homer and Virgil, the Bible and Ovid, translated sometimes word for word. His colours have not dissolved, and that destroys the charm of unity."

We should like to quote everything from these letters ; it would then be seen how delicate the taste for art was with Ballanche, how clear his ideas were, in his mind at any rate, and how keen his scruples were. He reproached Mme. de Staël, Sismondi, and Schlegel with having insisted too much on the form of poetry, instead of penetrating the essence of it. He did not take part in the violent criticisms which a certain Vicomte de S. published that year (1816) against these three authors, in a volume entitled *L'Anti-romantique*, but at the same time he also blamed these writers for the vagueness of their theories.

Nothing does more honour to Mme. Récamier than to have been thus associated in the researches of so refined a mind. Beside her, Montbel was the only support upon whom he would consent to lean. The time came when Ballanche found that a correspondence, even as detailed as his was, no longer sufficed. Whilst Camille Jordan was endeavouring to be elected as deputy, Ballanche was only thinking about leaving Lyons, in order to settle down near his friend. His father was ill. Lyonese society was divided by the most ardent political discussions. Ballanche hoped that the destinies of France were about to be established. "I read M. de Chateaubriand's work with infinite sadness," he wrote to Mme. Récamier on the 1st of October, 1816. "He has excited certain brains and exasperated certain minds. I do not think he has done good anywhere. The interests and the self-esteem born of the Revolution are stronger than old souvenirs and rigorous ethics. We cannot go back to a transaction sanctioned by royal will and imposed on us by the very force of things."¹

Ballanche little thought when writing this letter of the rôle that Chateaubriand was soon to play in Mme. Récamier's life. The father of Ballanche died in October, 1816,² and, set free

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection (Address, Madame Récamier, Rue Basse du Rempart 32, Paris).

² See *Souv. et Corr.* I, p. 296 and following. Compare *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 98 and 99.

by this misfortune, having nothing to keep him any longer in Lyons, where he had refused all public functions and was only President of the Academy, a post that did not interfere with his liberty, Ballanche made all necessary arrangements for a sister who was dear to him, and in the summer of 1817 went to Paris to live. He took with him the manuscript of his *Essai sur les institutions sociales*. He had undertaken this work at the request of his friend Ampère,¹ and he intended bringing it out before the opening of the Chambers. The publication of it, however, was delayed, and the essay did not appear until 1818.²

Ballanche replaced the friends who had left Mme. Récamier. Adrien de Montmorency was still in Spain; Constant had left in November, 1815, after trying in vain to get his services accepted.³ At the beginning of the year 1816 he was living in London, still discontented, troubled, and disappointed, thinking, "with a sentiment mixed with terror and desire,"⁴ of the moment when he could take up again in Paris the sweetest of his habits and customs.⁵

From Madrid, Adrien de Montmorency wrote Mme. Récamier letters that were full of charm.

"If," he says on the 29th of August, 1815, "you had any kindness in your friendships, and cared more for old memories so full of delight, you would write to me better than you do; you would not confine yourself to graceful things which always give one an idea of you, but you would open your heart and tell me confidential things and things that would be of extreme interest. No one has a keener discernment than you. You have always done, and persuaded others to do, as you have wished. If your intelligence were at my disposal I should get the most useful insight into things, the most exact

¹ See Ampère's letter dated November 8, 1816. *Corresp. des Ampère* I, p. 102.

² See *Oeuvres compl.*, II of the small edition, p. 1.

³ See *Lettres à Mme. R.*, p. 250 and following. ⁴ *Lettres*, p. 295.

⁵ *Adolphe* appeared in 1816. On the 14th of October of this year, Sismondi wrote to Mme. d'Albany: "The author had not the same reasons for dissimulating the secondary personages. Therefore names can be given to them by the way. The obliging friend, who under pretext of reconciling him with Ellénoire makes the quarrel worse, is Mme. Récamier." —*Lettres à Mme. d'Albany*, p. 301.

information, and a thoroughly interesting picture of persons with whom we spent our earlier days in circumstances often disturbed by storms. Up to the present, the years that have passed have only given you advantages, without taking from you any of the power of your charm. It was you who once said to me, ‘We have nothing in our heart that time does not reveal.’ Reveal to me then your worth, what you can do during absence, and honour and beautify by your attentions this pitiless absence.

“Tell me about *Albertine*, that is—about her mother. And, this marriage of the former! You have seen Mme. de Dur., then, of whom you tell me; and that great Prince from the North, who has again been to offer sacrifice and homage to you, what are you doing with him? ¹ Adieu. I have nothing to tell you about here. If I were young and dissipated I should think the Spanish women charming with their mantillas. They are remarkably graceful when walking and dancing. Dancing is what everyone likes best here after love.

“Adieu again, my dear friend. I have two portraits with me of the prettiest and most charming person in the world. They remind me of the attachment and of the friendship I have consecrated to her for ever. My son has just arrived at full speed, after coming 300 leagues in this intolerable heat with scarcely a halt. He is as black as an African.” ²

Mme. Récamier had promised Adrien a series of long, thoughtful letters, but she only wrote him short notes. The Ambassador complained of this. In December he sent his son to Juliette, introducing him in the following terms: “You will see a young Hussar with a moustache, and you will find him rather nice, unless his shyness appears to you awkwardness. I shall give him a letter for you and some Spanish airs which you can play to him and which will make his heart beat, as he has already been in love on this side the mountains.” Mme. Récamier sent on to Adrien letters from Mme. de Stael which were full of endearing terms and very

¹ In his unpublished letter of July 4th, 1816, Adrien writes: “Tell me of the return of Albertine’s mother. And her brother, what is he doing? Does his ardour for Juliette no longer exist?”

² Unpublished letter from Adrien de Montmorency in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

flattering.¹ She welcomed young Henry very graciously. Adrien was hoping for a leave of absence, and in the summer of 1817 he was able to go to Paris.

Henry de Montmorency could not see Mme. Récamier without falling in love with her. There is nothing more touching than the letters he wrote her, asking her to forgive him for his audacity and begging for her confidence, as that would make him supremely happy. He in his turn suffered with *the family complaint*.² He begs Juliette to come to a ball, and for this request he finds expressions in which we recognize the son of the witty Adrien.³ Another time he sends her a little cross. "Perhaps," he says, "the sentiments that it expresses are rather more royalistic than yours, but they are mine. Allow me to take this way of reminding you of me."⁴ Henry de Montmorency was a captain at Rennes. Juliette was kind to him, but she let him continue his way to his garrison.

Besides, at this time she appeared to be still affected by her intercourse with Mme. de Krüdener, and to have kept up a certain religious enthusiasm which Ballanche tried to encourage. On the 14th of January, 1816, Baron de Vogt wrote from Flosbeck to Degérando as follows : "Tell me, I beg you, what dear Juliette is doing. I should like her to give herself up entirely to piety, that satisfies and consoles the heart. In sensitive minds religion has always a shade of mysticism. It is always love, and love needs mystery. Juliette's religion will always have the kindness and ineffable sweetness of her disposition."⁵ She continued receiving the homages of her would-be wooers, but she regretted the time they caused her to waste and to Paul David she wrote the following lines :

[1816.]

"I do not know why you should say, my dear Paul, that I have withdrawn my friendship. It is so true and trusting a

¹ Unpublished letter of December 11th, 1815, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. Address, Madame Récamier, Rue Basse du Rempart, near Passage Cendrier.

² Letter No. 1 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

³ Letter No. 2.

⁴ Letter No. 3. These letters were written one after the other. One of them is dated 1816.

⁵ *Lettres . . .* published by Degérando, p. 21.

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friendship, and it has existed so long a time, that I never suppose it necessary to talk to you about it in order to make you believe in it. Together with this friendship I have a great appreciation of your intelligence and conversation. It is quite true that with all this I see very little of you, and I spend a great deal of my life with people for whom I have much less friendship than for you. I have a facility or weakness of character which leaves the disposal of my time in the hands of those who exercise a little determination. I do not give my time, but I allow it to be taken. I waste my hours instead of employing them. You sent me a letter from M. de Nadaillac and one from Henri de Montm. These are correspondences which are rather young for me. . . . Adieu. Write to me ; tell me all the great and small news."¹

In the summer of 1816, Mme. Récamier went to see her cousin Mme. de Dalmassy, who was living in the department of Haute-Saône.² Her visit was not a very gay one, if we are to judge by the following letters which she sent to Paul David :

“ June 4th [1816].

“ I am sending you, my dear Paul, a letter which I beg you to use discreetly. Do write to me. Life at Châlons was dissipated in comparison with this. Its absolute monotony is only broken by the bickerings of the mother-in-law. I really think I have done a good deed in coming. I am at work on my will by way of recreation. When one sees that money is so necessary if people are to be kind, one regrets not having a great deal of it. Tell me whether things are going satisfactorily. I was terrified lest they had put Mme. de la in my bedroom. I should never have gone in there again, I believe, if they had. Tell me whether she has left. I do not like insipid, palavering people, especially when they are tiresome into the bargain. You, who have nothing of all this about you, but would be perfect if you were not unsociable, write to me, and write in your *good hand-writing*

¹ Letters to Paul David. No. 7, unsigned and unpublished, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² *Souv. et Corr.* I, pp. 333 and 334.

so that I can read it. Adieu. I have a great deal of friendship for you, whatever you may say about it, and I am quite sure that at the bottom of your heart you do not doubt it.”¹

“June 17th [1816].

“Thank you, my dear Paul, for your kind exactitude. I shall put it down to your credit in all the perfections that I insist on discovering in you. I am just recovering from a headache that has caused me the most horrible suffering. I am going to try the waters at Plombières, and I should like to take my cousin with me, as she has quite as much need of them as I have. We are in the same solitude all the time, but I receive an enormous quantity of letters. They only arrive every other day, but that day is a day of dissipation. I am getting accustomed to finding your handwriting amongst them. I go on to a little balcony looking on to the garden, and there I read and re-read my letters at pleasure. When I return to Paris I hope you will come to meet me, to make up for the rudeness with which you refused to accompany me. Prince Augustus writes that he will come to Plombières. He says this with such simplicity that if I raise any objection it would make me seem like Nina Vernon. I am afraid, though, that this voyage may make a bad impression. What do you think about it ? ”²

(VESOUL.) “June 26th, 1816.³

“You would be very wrong, my dear Paul, in feeling *jealous* about the letter I sent you. It was solely a *work of charity*. I was told that some one was unhappy and discouraged, and I used all my eloquence in trying to find, and make the most of, all the incentives to happiness and success that there might still be. I went, perhaps, rather beyond the truth ; pity is a kind of passion with me, but as it is not exclusive, there is no danger.

¹ Letters to Paul David. Unpublished and unsigned. No. 8 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

² Letters to Paul David. Unsigned and unpublished. No. 5 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

³ The date is from the post-mark.

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"Finally, my dear Paul, for nearly a month I have not heard a single word of adoration. I am getting used to a monotonous life and, if I had no friends that I wanted to see, I could stay here without any difficulty."¹

On Dr. Récamier's advice, Juliette went to Plombières.² Her doctor prescribed for her the "contemplation of Nature" and "exercise in the open air." On her return to Paris the most distressing emotion was in store for her. She was to be present at the last illness and witness the death of the friend to whom she was united by an intimacy of twenty years.

In October 1815, Mme. de Staél had decided, on account of M. de Rocca's health, to go to Italy. She took with her her daughter and Guillaume Schlegel; August de Staél and the Duc de Broglie were to join her in January.³ On the 27th of October she wrote from Milan to Mme. Récamier, who had sent her one of Benjamin Constant's recent articles. "What force of bitterness!" she said in this letter. "It is in that that his talent consists. I do not know whether he will lay it at the foot of the cross or at your feet."⁴ She had freely forgiven the past. Never had she had more enthusiasm for her principles and more fidelity to them. When her friend asked her to return to Paris she replied: "No; truly I should not care to rejoice in the franchises of the people, I who believe that nations are born free."⁵ She considered Mathieu's conduct exaggerated and, although she was still fond of Adrien de Montmorency, Ambassador to Spain, she blamed him and called him the *Prince of Madrid*.⁶ She soon left Milan to avoid the fêtes, which did not appeal to her "French heart."⁷ From afar she was interested in Mme. de Krüdener. Mme. Récamier and she saw in this mystic "a forerunner of a great religious epoch."⁸

¹ Letters to Paul David. Unsigned. No. 10 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 334 and following. In 1816 Prince Augustus, still infatuated, asked Mme. Récamier's permission to go to see her at Plombières. She refused it. On August 13th, 1816, he wrote to her from Spa, informing her that he would cease all correspondence with her. See M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.

³ Blennerhassett, III, p. 662 and following.

⁴ Autograph letter of October 27th. No. 206 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS. See *Coppet et Weimar*, p. 306 and following.

⁵ Same letter.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

From Milan, Mme. de Staél went to Genoa. She was uneasy all the time about de Rocca's health.¹ The French Government had refunded the two million francs advanced by Necker, and constituted an income of 100,000 francs for his daughter. On the 15th and 20th February the marriage, which had been delayed solely on account of this, took place at Pisa and at Livourne.² On the 17th Mme. de Staél wrote to Mme. Récamier from Pisa to tell her the great news. There was a double ceremony, Catholic and Protestant, in Italian and in English.³ Benjamin wrote from Brussels, on his way to London, a letter that one would like to think was from his heart. Mme. de Staél received it, but did not think it necessary to reply to it.⁴ Constant complained of this to Mme. Récamier. "I know Albertine is married," he says, "and I hope she will be happy. Her husband is an excellent man, and I do not think that she, thanks to what her education has made of her, has an absolute need of expansive tenderness. Mme. de Staél has brought her children to perfect reasonableness by the excess and the contradictions of her own enthusiasm. At the bottom of my heart I have, together with my affection for her, a kind of anger, like that of the Irishman who blamed a woman for having changed him when at nurse."⁵

This marriage had naturally affected Mme. de Staél a great deal. The English ceremony touched her more than the Catholic one.⁶ She was very much attached to the Duc de Broglie, on account of his great delicacy and his tenderness. Auguste, on the contrary, caused her some disappointment by his delay in making a name⁷ and his excessive fondness for society pleasures. M. de Rocca, although ill, worked a great deal, and read eight hours a day.⁸

From Pisa the travellers went to Florence, where they settled in May. Mme. de Staél found a little tranquillity

¹ Autograph letter of October 27th, No. 206 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.

² Blennerhassett, III, p. 665.

³ Letter No. 207 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS. Part of this letter is published in *Coppet et Weimar*, p. 316, and in *Souv. et Corr.* I, p. 298.

⁴ She says so in the letter No. 207.

⁵ *Lettres de B. Constant à Mme. Récamier*, pp. 295-296.

⁶ Copy of letter No. 208 in M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS. A fragment of it is published in *Souv. et Corr.* I, pp. 298 and 299. ⁷ Same letter. ⁸ *Ibid.*

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once more in this city. Her thoughts went out toward Paris. "I should like to know beforehand," she asked Juliette, "what you think of the general spirit of society, and whether our liberal ideas are welcomed or not." Corinne was bored in Italy; she realized, too, that her health was declining, so that she could feel nothing keenly but sadness.¹

She returned to Coppet in June, 1816, to receive Stein there, "wandering like herself, embittered as she was, disabused by kings who were traitorous to their word, ungrateful to their servitors, despoilers of their people." How far away all this was from the days of the book on Germany, the treatise on enthusiasm, the St. Petersburg *soirées*, and "the aurora borealis of 1812."² She continued with the Emperor Alexander that correspondence which is so much to her honour, in which she begged him to "establish toleration in religion and representative government in the social order."³ For some years she had leaned decidedly towards a mysticism which should unite "what is good in Catholicism and in Protestantism" and should "separate completely religion from the political influence of priests."⁴

At Coppet Mme. de Staél was anxious all the time about the uncertain health of M. de Rocca. Fortunately her daughter's marriage gave her great joy. She was alarmed, from what she knew of her friend, Mathieu, more particularly, about the party spirit which reigned in France. She flattered herself with having foreseen this crisis. Auguste was travelling about in Switzerland and Germany with his friend Mme. de Saint-Aulaire. He was, as his mother owned, very devoted to the fair sex. Mme. Récamier was very much in demand, for, always obliging and devoted to her friends, she continued to be "the pretty dove carrying the olive branch" to those around her.⁵

¹ Autograph letter of May 23rd, 1816, No. 209 of M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS. Post-mark May 6th, 1816. See *Coppet et Weimar*, pp. 314-315.

² A Sorel, *Mme. de Staél*, pp. 161 and 162.

³ See *Lettres de l'empereur Alexandre Ier et Mme. de Staél* (1814-1817) in the *Revue de Paris*, January 1st, 1897.

⁴ See her letter of December 27th, 1815, to Mme. Degérando. *Lettres inédites* published by M. Degérando, p. 78.

⁵ From the letter dated from Coppet, July 15th, 1816. No. 210 of M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS. See *Coppet et Weimar*, p. 317.

Mme. de Staél hoped to go to Paris in September if M. de Rocca's health would allow of this. She had ceased corresponding with Mathieu de Montmorency, whose political attitude appeared to her inadmissible.¹ It was Mme. Récamier who made Mathieu write to her, in order, no doubt, to justify himself, and Mme. de Staél thanked her for it.² Once more Juliette had brought about a reconciliation. A letter from Coppet assured her of this: "Since you say, in your sweet way, that Mathieu still cares for me, I wrote to him yesterday. But had he noticed that I was not writing to him? And is he not in the third period of the enthusiasms of his life: liberty, religion, ambition? And although he is very faithful in friendship, that is never anything but a very poor accessory."³ At this last stage of her life Mme. de Staél, and we say it without any exaggeration, was thinking about the future of France. She rejoiced in the *dissolution*, the disappointments of Sosthènes. She might have been almost happy if M. de Rocca had not been ill; if Benjamin had not been so attentive to Juliette; if Auguste had not been somewhat dissipated.⁴

In the autumn of 1816 she returned to Paris and settled in the Rue Royale.⁵ This was for the sake of beginning work again, her *Considérations sur la Révolution française*. "One must, as long as one lives," she wrote to Mme. Degérando on December 3rd, 1816, "maintain the colour of one's life."⁶ She still had, in spite of her political disappointments, certain family joys and some happiness in society.

We cannot read without emotion the last letters from Mme. de Staél to the woman who had been to her so valuable a confidant, the woman she had loved with an affection which had scarcely been dimmed by a few clouds. The writing is somewhat hesitating, and the letters are very short, not much like the long ones of former days. "I can-

¹ Unpublished autograph letter dated July 26th from Coppet. No. 211 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.

² Unpublished autograph letter from Coppet, September 23rd. No. 213 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.

³ Copy of letter. No. 214. Undated; the same origin. See *Coppet et Weimar*, p. 318.

⁴ From the same letter.

⁵ A. Sorel, *Mme. de Staél*, p. 162.

⁶ *Lettres inédites*, published by Degérando, p. 85.

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not," she says in one of these notes, "go through this morning without reminding you of me. Here is my book, and I shall be with you this morning at ten o'clock. You will not find me *indifferent*; I do not like anything with more charm than you. I am depressed by the opium."¹ The following letter shows us still more weariness. "I arrived, dear friend, half dead with fatigue. If you will be kind enough to come to see me at two o'clock, I shall be up again. If that is inconvenient to you, I will go to your house at any hour you like to tell me after two. I should be very solitary here without you."² The last phrase that Mme. de Stael wrote to Mme. Récamier is no doubt the following one: "I embrace you with all that is left of me."³

Mme. de Stael's health gave her friends the keenest anxiety. On the 19th of March, 1817, Ballanche wrote the following lines to Mme Récamier :⁴

"I feel real sorrow about it, and I think I shall not be the only one. It is very certain that she is one of the most remarkable women imaginable. She has exercised considerable influence over the opinions of her century, and it must be remembered that to exercise such influence on such a century, a very great power of imagination was necessary. A book, a word, a step taken by this woman have very often been an event in this century so fertile in events. She will not be able to leave this world, therefore, without making a void. Her enemies themselves will be obliged to acknowledge that. But what affects me before everything else is the intense grief that you cannot fail to feel if the misfortune which is feared should happen. Mme. de Stael has held too great a place in your affections, has been too much in your life, for you not to feel deep distress. If I dared I would talk to you of reason and of the rules prescribed by it in these fatal circumstances; but I know how powerless reason is. I shall sorrow with you; that is all I can do. I shall

¹ Unpublished autograph letter. No. 215 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.

² No. 216 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS., published in *Coppet et Weimar*, p. 320.

³ No. 217 of M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS., published in *Coppet et Weimar*, p. 333.

⁴ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. Madame Récamier, Rue Basse du Rempart, No. 32, Paris.

think with you about all the troubles of life. I shall tell you that neither the most startling qualities, nor yet the most humble qualities, can free us from the dominion of human destinies. And yet I am far from despairing even now. There are sometimes, in the forces of life, hidden resources which remain ignored by the most skilful doctors, and doctors must be accustomed to deceiving our fears as often as our hopes. . . . Besides, you have never been too much favoured by illusions of happiness; evil circumstances must take you less unawares than other people."

In February, 1817, Mme. de Staél was taken ill at a ball at the house of the Duc Decazes.¹ She fell down paralyzed. "Mme. de Staél has been very near death," wrote Constant to his sister Rosalie,² "and I am afraid, unfortunately, that she is affected in such a way that she will not recover for some time, if indeed she should ever completely recover. This event has caused me extreme sorrow." In April, however, she was supposed to have recovered. Ballanche was delighted. "Whatever may be anyone's opinions, it is always a sad thing to see such existences come to an end. This frivolous and heedless century cannot even help uttering groans when those who have been its ornament, who have contributed to its splendour, who in a word make it live through the centuries to come, pass away." His interest is next given to Chateaubriand, who had just put the Vallée-aux-Loups into a lottery and had announced this in the newspapers.³ The improvement in Mme. de Staél's health did not last long. She was taken to an hotel in the Rue des Mathurins. Chateaubriand had been to see her in the Rue Royale. He found her sitting in her bed, "propped up by pillows."⁴ "Her cheeks were feverish," he writes. "Her beautiful eyes met mine in the darkness and she said, 'How do you do, my dear Francis? I am ill, but that does not prevent my caring for you.'"

¹ A. Sorel, *Mme. de Staél*, p. 163.

² April 17th, 1817. Geneva Library, McC. 36.

³ The same letter:—"I consider this worse than bad, for I think it wretched. No doubt his name adds something to this little piece of land. But ought he to go in for stock-jobbing on his fame?"

⁴ *M.O.T.* IV, p. 461 and following.

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M. de Rocca, who was dying himself, was present during this last illness. "These two spectres," continues Chateaubriand, "looking at each other in silence, the one up and pale, the other half lying down, her face coloured with blood that was about to descend again and to turn cold at her heart, made me shiver." Chateaubriand also went to the Rue Neuve des Mathurins, where Mme. de Stael once more invited her friends to dinner. It was upon this occasion that he found himself seated next to Mme. Récamier. "I had not met her for twelve years," he says. If Ballanche's information be correct, and there is no reason for us to contest it, Chateaubriand went to Mme. Récamier's at the time of the Restoration, to give that reading of the *Abencérages* of which the Duchesse de Broglie speaks,¹ but when he saw Juliette again at this dinner, which was almost funereal, he only remembered her apparition a dozen years earlier in Mme. de Stael's *salon*.

On the 26th of June, Mme. de Stael wrote Mme. de Duras a note that Sainte-Beuve read later on.² She dictated it to her son Auguste, as she was no longer strong enough to write herself. "She added at the end with her own hand, in large characters, uneven and wavering: 'Kind regards to René.'" Chateaubriand was told this, and in his *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* he expresses his gratitude.³ On the 8th of July, Mme. Récamier, writing from Plombières to Mme. Darlens, excuses herself for not going to see her.

"Mme. de Stael's situation," she writes, "is still the same. There is no immediate danger, but no hope of cure. Her imagination is also affected. It is impossible to see her without being heartbroken at her state. She only sees her intimate friends now, and cannot see them for long at a time, but in the midst of all her sufferings she still keeps the charm of her intelligence. The endeavour to please, at a time when it would only be natural to think of one's self alone, has something so pathetic about it that it is impossible not to be moved by it. She is being nursed in the most touching manner by all

¹ See Chapter XII of this work. Sainte-Beuve also declares that Chateaubriand saw Mme. Récamier in 1814.—*Portr. de femmes*, p. 125.

² See *Portr. de femmes*, p. 124, note 2.

³ Vol. IV, p. 463.

who are with her, but particularly by Mlle. Bindake and Mme. de Broglie."¹

Mme. de Staél died on the 14th of July 1817. It was a great trouble to her to die.² Opium soothed her last moments and spared her what she dreaded so much, the painful torments of the death agony. Mme. Récamier was in great consternation at this death. On the 29th of July, Mme. Dufrénoy wrote Coulmann this touching letter, which Sainte-Beuve quotes :³

"I deeply regret Mme. de Staél. I think, as you do, that in many respects she can never be replaced. Mme. Récamier is inconsolable. She came to see me yesterday, and her beautiful eyes filled with such sincere tears that I was touched to the depths of my soul. This grief is the greatest praise for Mme. de Staél. As I looked at Mme. Récamier I thought of the words Mme. Cottin put into Malvina's mouth. 'He has not wept all his tears !' I suffered horribly by not being able to cry. My chest is still heavy with my grief. After Mme. Récamier's departure I thought over the criticism of people. This pretty woman has so often been accused of coquetry and of frivolity, and yet I saw her given up to so deep a feeling of regret, she expressed in so few words and with such sweetness her sorrow, that more than once it seemed to me all Mme. de Staél's success was not worth as much as such a friendship. Finally, when she laid her head on my shoulder and her tears fell on my dress, I pressed her hand firmly to my heart and I felt that misfortune is the strongest of all charms."

Just at this time, Mme. Récamier, who was very anxious about the health of her cousin, Mme. de Dalmassy, went to live at Montrouge at La Vallière, a house belonging to Amaury-Duval, which she had rented for the season.⁴ There was a park there for her sick relative. It was here that the Duc de Laval and the Duchesse de Luynes came to see her at

¹ In Catalogue Bovet. Series X (*Femmes célèbres*, p. 810, No. 2121).

² Géraud, *Un homme de lettres sous l'Empire et la Restauration*, p. 209. Compare *Notice sur la maladie et la mort de Mme. la baronne de Staél*, by M. Portal, Paris, Fain (s.d.) in-12, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ln 27, 19159. See also Rondelet, *Éloge de Mme. R.*, p. 136.

³ *Nouveaux Lundis*, IX, p. 149.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr. I*, p. 299.

noon on the 14th of July, to tell her of Mme. de Stael's death.¹ A letter from Schlegel to Mathieu de Montmorency had been sent to the Duc de Laval, confirming the sad news.

On the 15th of July, Mathieu de Montmorency wrote to Mme. Récamier from Paris :

"I was going to send to Montrouge when it occurred to me that Adrien or Sosthènes would bring you this letter and give me news of you, which I want very much. Please think of your friends by taking care of yourself. I was only able to see Mme. de Broglie late. She is at home, but more dejected, perhaps, there than in the sad house itself. M. Rocca has been moved. He was in the best rooms ; I saw him in bed, and he was very weak. They are all admirable in doing all they can. Auguste has orders to give of a very sad kind, and he was like a madman with scruples lest he should not be carrying out his mother's intentions. Mme. de Broglie knew, through Schlegel, how thoroughly you shared her grief : she will receive you to-morrow or the day after, as you prefer. This was said very simply and without giving any cause for the susceptibility that your friends had for you yesterday. . . . Every moment some very sad thought keeps recurring, but it is a consolation to share every one of them with you."²

Baron de Vogt heard at Flosbeck of Mme. de Stael's death. In spite of the difficulties which at the last had separated him from this friend, he had now only "very sweet memories of her." "We shall never see another woman like her," he wrote to Degérando on the 28th of July, 1817. "Her enthusiasm for all that was beautiful and good, the soul with which she expressed her opinions about both, the vivacity of a brilliant mind, the grace that she put in her words, all that is before me all the time : I shall never forget her. . . . She was good. Her errors of judgment may have led her heart astray, but they never degraded it. It was the consciousness of her goodness which made the close of her life beautiful."³

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, p. 300.

² Unpublished letter from Mathieu de Montmorency (No. 81 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection).

³ *Lettres inédites*, published by Degérando, pp. 86 and 87.

With none of her friends had Mme. de Staél been more affectionate than with Juliette. This long intimacy had not been free from disturbances, but the affection which united the two women had resisted all these incidents. In one of her last letters to Juliette Mme. de Staél had said to her : "I do not make the mistake of failing to love you with all my heart. As to judging you, I certainly appreciate you very highly, since I love you so much, but with you it has been the same as in a more intense sentiment. I have had moments of enthusiasm and moments of anger. It is impossible that friendship with a person like you, with such qualities and such pretty little faults, should not produce this kind of agitation in the soul."¹

Juliette remained faithful, to the last day of her life, to the memory of her illustrious friend. In 1817, the Duchesse de Broglie asked Gérard to paint her mother's portrait. Gérard acceded to this request, and painted the picture in which Mme. de Staél is represented as far as the bust, with bare arms and a turban on her head. By way of expressing her gratitude, the Duchesse de Broglie gave the artist a copy of *Considérations sur la Révolution française*, revised by Mme. de Staél and her son Auguste.² Mme. Récamier did all she could to help Gérard in his work. She sent him a full-length portrait of Mme. de Staél, painted by Massot of Geneva.³ A letter exists from Mme. Récamier to Gérard after sending this picture to him.⁴

In 1818, Mme. Récamier acted as intermediary between Gérard and Prince Augustus of Prussia. The latter wished to order a picture, the subject of which should be taken from *Corinne*.⁵ The artist undertook this work, and promised to deliver it within fifteen months for the price of 18,000 francs. "Whilst expressing my gratitude for this kindness," the Prince wrote, "I should like also to propose for your consideration

¹ Unpublished autograph letter. No. 201 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

² *Corr. de Fr. Gérard*, pp. 328 and 329.

³ Bequeathed later on by Mme. Récamier to Prince Albert de Broglie.

⁴ Montpellier Library. The Fabre collection.

⁵ The letter from Prince Augustus to Gérard is written from Aix-la-Chapelle, September 28th, 1818. M. Ch. de Loménié's collection, No. 75 bis.

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the idea of representing Corinne with the features idealized of Mme. de Stael, and to choose the moment of her triumph at the Capitol, or when she is at Cape Misène. I do not wish, however, to interfere with you at all in the composition of this work."¹ *Corinne* was exhibited at the Salon of 1819, and studied by Thiers in his criticism of that year.² Augustus of Prussia did not see the picture when it was finished. He asked Gérard to have it conveyed to Mme. Récamier's.³ Mme. Lenormant tells us that David had first been approached about this picture.⁴ David agreed to represent the coronation of Corinne at the Capitol. He proposed to paint a picture, fifteen feet long by twelve wide, for 40,000 francs, and to finish it in eighteen months. Prince Augustus preferred arranging with Gérard, and he gave the picture to Mme. Récamier, who in her turn bequeathed it to the city of Lyons, where it is now to be seen in the Museum.⁵

Juliette did not only supervise the execution of these works, she did still more for her friend. Directly after Mme. de Stael's death, numbers of articles and works of all kinds were written on her. In 1818, Regnault de Warin published in Paris⁶ his study in two volumes on *L'Esprit de Mme. la baronne de Stael-Holstein*, a philosophical analysis, as the author announced, of the genius, the characteristics, the doctrine, and the influence of her works. He flattered himself that he had taken the five points of view "comprised in the public life of Mme. de Stael."⁷ The introduction to the work attested the keenest enthusiasm. Mme. Récamier did her best for the posthumous interests of her friend, whom the Liberals covered with praise and the Ultras, on the contrary, attempted to attack. Sainte-Beuve noted shrewdly what Mme. Récamier's influence on Chateaubriand had been in this respect.⁸ Chateaubriand and Mme. de Stael had more than one trait in common. Both of them demanded liberty, the

¹ *Corr. de Fr. Gérard*, pp. 340 and 341, letter of April 6th, 1819.

² *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. 21.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 341, letter of February 20th, 1821.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr. I*, p. 149 and following.

⁵ See *Catalogue somm. des musées de la ville de Lyon*, p. 59.

⁶ *Plancher.* ⁷ Introduction, p. viii.

⁸ *Portr. de femmes*, p. 124 and following.

former, though, with much less sincerity and frankness. Mme. de Duras had reconciled them, in spite of politics. And yet in her *Considérations sur la Révolution française*, Mme. de Staél had forgotten Chateaubriand. She might have paid dearly for this, so to speak ; and in fact, either for this reason or for others, Chateaubriand's article in *Le Conservateur* of December, 1819, was polite with regard to Mme. de Staél, but affectionate without any warmth and, on many points, reserved. Mme. Récamier became friendly with Chateaubriand. How changed the tone of his criticisms was of Mme. de Staél in the preface to *Études historiques* ! How changed above all in the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* ! Immediately after 1830, he went with Mme. Récamier to make her pilgrimage to Coppet, and there at that tomb he left the last vestiges of his ill-will. Thus did Juliette work, bringing distances nearer together, doing away with misunderstandings, dispersing prejudices, and asking others to do as she did herself, namely, forget all that divided, and only to remember what could unite.

Her sweetness and kindness had never been greater. George Ticknor saw her at this time.¹ He was present, on the 28th of May, 1817, at that dinner during Mme. de Staél's last days when Chateaubriand met Mme. Récamier again. He was charmed with her good sense and her graciousness. He even thought her still very beautiful. She did her utmost to oblige friends, new and old. In September, 1816, Chateaubriand had been crossed off the list of State Ministers. "It only meant," he writes, "going on foot or, on rainy days, in a cab to the Chamber of Peers."² He was obliged, too, to sell his library of books, only keeping a Homer which he had annotated, and he put up his country house for sale by a lottery. The Vallée-aux-Loups was offered for sale in April, 1817.³ The Vicomte de Montmorency bought it for the price of 50,100 francs.⁴ Chateaubriand had to say farewell to all those trees which he had planted, and to the shelter on which he had counted for his "old days,"⁵ the retreat for which he had paid with the "produce of his

¹ See his *Journal*, published at Boston, 1876, Vol. I, p. 137.

² *M.O.T.*, IV, pp. 143-144.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 145 and note.

⁵ *Ibid.*, I, p. 2.

dreams and of his sleepless nights," the refuge where he had written the *Martyrs*, the *Abencérages*, the *Itinéraire*, and *Moïse*.¹ Mme. Récamier had an idea of paying half, and so going shares in Mathieu de Montmorency's acquisition. She spent the autumn of 1818 and the summer of 1819 at the Vallée-aux-Loups, and there is no doubt that she would have settled there and grown attached to Aulnay but for the reverses of M. Récamier.²

Fresh friendships were offered to her. Mme. de Genlis overwhelmed her with attentions,³ after having treated her badly. General Lamarque was "wild" about her.⁴ Horace Vernet, it seems, paid her the homage of presenting her with his first sketch.⁵ But Juliette remained faithful to her old friends.

Mathieu de Montmorency talked to her of poor Corinne, whose misfortunes they had both shared.

"VENDÔME, August 1st, 1817.

"I will not wait any longer, sweet friend, before thanking you for your letter and for the *Mercure*. Everything had been delayed, and I only received the parcel yesterday, just as I was feeling very much inclined to write and reproach you. I recognized your sweet kindness in your exactitude. But how your sadness penetrates me. How sorry I am to know that you are almost alone, and separated from nearly all your friends at this time of trial and of cruel anxiety! I wanted to talk to you about this article in the *Mercure*, which I read eagerly. But that proves nothing. There are some suspicions of sentiments which gave me great pleasure, but which immediately afterwards caused me a kind of anger, mingled with envy, with this talent. I do not like him to put in this deep tenderness, which I do not think exists, and to find ideas and expressions with which she would have been satisfied. I wanted to write a few words, but I have very little courage for doing that. I must tell you of a little

¹ *M.O.T.*, I, p. 3.

² *Souv. et Corr.* I, pp. 318 and 319.

³ See *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 170.

⁴ *Lettres de Mme. Degrando*, pp. 285, 286, 287, 322.

⁵ *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1863, Vol. XV, p. 302.

trouble, from which my heart and imagination must suffer, that has just revived the great troubles. Do you remember that little box from Coppet, of which I thought a great deal? I wanted to keep it for ever, and on my inspection day in this town, in changing my coat, I lost it. I am so distressed about it. I am having it looked for, although I have quite decided to have it replaced. I should like to send for two such boxes; one would then be for you. That reminds me of my idea, which I want to carry out, namely, to have a copy of that beautiful painting of our friend. Think it over. Some occupation in common with you, and with her for its object, is one of the sweetest of consolations. Do you not feel the same? Adieu, sweet friend. I want to come and see you, to come and sorrow with you."¹

Adrien de Montmorency had returned to Spain very sad after his fresh farewells, but always enchanted with Juliette.² He had left his son at Poitiers and, as he was alone, he recalled his souvenirs and wrote those letters which were so charming and so full of delicacy and elegance. A line from Juliette reached him at Bayonne. He answered it at once by a long letter, mingling his anecdotes with protestations of attachment. "When you see my poor cousin," he writes, "sleeping with the fatigue of his day's work, and weighed down with his numerous affairs, talk to him of me and try to wake him up with my name. You have heard of the royal birth at Madrid. Although the event was not as thoroughly satisfactory as could have been desired, still everyone is content. The Castilians are not as disdainful as the French; they do not say as we do, '*It is nothing, it is a woman,*' like Fontaine. You do not tell me whether, in the Coppet will, there is any souvenir for you. Mathieu tells me that there are instructions given for a portrait to be ordered for him. . . . Do not give way to melancholy. Gaiety and diversion mean courage and not a want of feeling. . . . If you are tempted to indulge in the slightest coquetry, will you confide

¹ Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency. No address. (No. 78 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.)

² Unpublished letter of July 27th, 1817. M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.

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in me?"¹ The day after his arrival in Madrid, Adrien found a letter from Juliette. When replying to it he wrote the following enigmatic words: "This scrawl is certainly most shameful compared with your letters from *Greece*, of which you tell me such wonders. What I doubt is the sincerity of a person in whom the care and love of himself are so dominant."² In these last words it would be difficult not to recognize Chateaubriand. He was allowed from this time forth to go regularly to Juliette's. He saw her frequently in the Rue Basse-du-Rempart and Rue d'Anjou. "At the house in the Rue d'Anjou," he writes in his *Mémoires*,³ "there was a garden, and in the garden a bower of lime-trees, between the leaves of which I could catch a glimpse of moonlight whilst waiting for Mme. Récamier." At the death-bed of Mme. de Staél, Juliette had met the man who was to rule over the remainder of her existence.

¹ Unpublished letter of August 30th, 1817. M. Ch. de Loménie's papers.

² Unpublished letter of September 8th, 1817. M. Ch. de Loménie's papers. ³ Vol. IV, p. 464.

CHAPTER XIV

THE INTIMACY WITH CHATEAUBRIAND (1818—1819)

Juliette begins to receive Chateaubriand.—*René* and women : Mme. de Chateaubriand ; Pauline de Beaumont ; the Marquise de Custine ; the Duchesse de Mouchy (Mme. de Noailles), the Duchesse de Duras.—Chateaubriand in 1818.—The anxiety of Mathieu de Montmorency.—Mme. Récamier at Dieppe and at Aix-la-Chapelle (1818).—Ballanche publishes the *Essai sur les institutions sociales* ; his letters.—Mme. Récamier's correspondence with Paul David, Mathieu and Adrien de Montmorency.—Fresh entreaties from Augustus of Prussia.—Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier's friends.—Juliette goes to live at the Abbaye-aux-Bois (October, 1819).—Brillat-Savarin.—Mlle. Cyvoct.

EVERYONE has read the charming advice which Sainte-Beuve gives to women, in that article of his *Causeries* in which he tells of Voltaire's *liaison* with Mme. du Châtelet : “Do not fall in love with Voltaire,” he says ; “neither with Jean-Jacques, Goethe, nor Chateaubriand, if by chance you happen to meet with such great men on your way through life. Whom are you to love, then ? Love the man who simply and thoroughly returns your affection ; love the man who offers you the whole of a heart, even if he should have no celebrated name and if he should only be a Chevalier Des Grieux. An honest Des Grieux and a virtuous Manon, that would be the ideal for those who can be happy quietly ; glory as the third in the tête-à-tête only spoils everything.”¹

Nothing could better justify this advice than the story of the intercourse of Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier. He introduced himself, or rather he imposed himself, with all the

¹ *Causeries du Lundi*, II, p. 275.

seductions of genius and all the exactions of an unparalleled egoism. It was only in 1818 that Juliette began to receive him,¹ but from the very first he took on the airs of a conqueror and master. "This great, haughty savage only likes to see himself, and himself alone, in the house; he wants to set up his solitary throne there." Juliette had to subjugate, soften, and tame this weary lion, who was disgusted with the universe and with himself, and always ready to say with Macbeth, "I begin to be aweary of the sun," and with Hamlet, "man delights not me; nor woman neither."² Juliette herself was subjugated. "It is quite useless," says Scherer very rightly,³ "to try, with most biographers, to put everyone on the wrong track with regard to the nature of the sentiments with which Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier inspired each other. René, veritable conqueror as he was, had only to appear in order to vanquish. Poor Juliette had at last met with the master of her destiny. Her heart opened to those sentiments which she had not known hitherto. Her coldness or her pride gave way before the fire of a passion of which she had thought herself incapable."

As for Chateaubriand, this was neither his first love nor his first adventure. He had married on the 19th of March, 1792, at the age of twenty-four, a young orphan girl very pretty and fairly wealthy, a Mlle. Céleste Buisson de la Vigne. He had accomplished "the most serious act of his life" without the slightest enthusiasm and even without any inclination. About this marriage and about the circumstances connected with it there is still some mystery.⁴ What is certain, as we have this information from Chateaubriand himself, is that René, whilst rendering justice to his wife's intelligence,⁵ to her education, and her virtues, had no real intimacy with her. In the part of his *Mémoires* which he wrote in 1822 under Mme. Récamier's influence, and which he went through again in 1845, at the end of Mme. de Chateaubriand's life, he bursts out into reproaches which are scarcely

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 306 and 307.

² J. Lemoine, *Débats*, November 24th, 1859.

³ *Etudes . . .* V, p. 93.

⁴ See Biré's discussion on *Le Mariage de Chateaubriand*, edition of *M.O.T.*, I, p. 549 and following. ⁵ *M.O.T.*, II, p. 7 and following.

dissimulated against his wife—and this shocks us as well as his want of delicacy. He accuses her of “never having read two lines of his works,” of not being interested in anything, and he complains of her being difficult to deal with. Under the praise the censure is felt, although the portrait terminates in a hymn of gratitude. Fortunately for Mme. de Chateaubriand, we know her elsewhere. Her *Mémoires* have been published.¹ The history of her sentiments and life has been studied.² From the time of her first stay in Paris with Chateaubriand she had had a foretaste of all the bitternesses which awaited her. She was very soon forsaken and almost without resources. When Chateaubriand started for Condé's army, and she had to return to Brittany, she was, as the wife of a political emigrant, shut up in the Rennes prison, where she remained until the 9th of Thermidor. Chateaubriand returned to France in the spring of 1800. He remained nearly three years in Paris before thinking of joining his wife. He saw her at the end of 1802, when Pauline de Beaumont had already made a conquest of him, and during the twenty-four hours that he devoted to Mme. de Chateaubriand he promised to take her to Rome, where he was to go as Secretary to the Embassy. “I could only stay twenty-four hours with my wife and my sisters,” he says himself, “and then I returned to Paris.”³

Mme. de Chateaubriand, then, was quite joyful at the thought of taking up once more her life with her husband, after being prevented so long by circumstances, but it was Mme. de Beaumont after all who took her place at Rome. The Vicomtesse de Chateaubriand was not reintegrated in her rights until 1804. We can scarcely be surprised, therefore, that she allowed herself to be asked for some time before consenting to join her husband in France, at that house in the Rue de Beaune where he was waiting until it was time to go to the Valais.⁴ “The former loss of nearly all Mme. de Chateaubriand's fortune was aggravated by the ruin of an

¹ Pailhès, *Mémoires inédits de Madame de Chateaubriand*, I, vol. in-8°, Féret, Bordeaux.

² See M. Paléologue, *Profils de femmes*, Paris, C. Lévy, p. 181 and following.

³ *M.O.T.*, II, p. 326.

⁴ *Ibid.*, II, pp. 396 and 397.

uncle who owed her money. M. de Chateaubriand was obliged to reiterate his entreaties in order to get her to return. When she had finally decided to accompany him on his mission to the Valais she promptly joined him in Paris."¹

After this there were long conversations with Joubert at Villeneuve-sur-Yonne; she accompanied her husband in his Savoy and Swiss excursions, met Mme. de Staél, about whom she wrote some piquant remarks,² and even went as far as Venice with the illustrious traveller, whom some mysterious reasons called to the East. This fresh departure of Chateaubriand made her all the more tender, and in her loving distress she wrote to Joubert: "I am dying of fear, dying of despair, in short dying of everything."³ She was not as cold, then, as it has been said, and whilst Chateaubriand was rushing off to Granada she was suffering morally and physically. She had some happy days at the Vallée-aux-Loups, charming descriptions of which she has left us; but Chateaubriand, intoxicated by success, became unbearable when he was no longer unhappy. The last years of the Empire brought nothing but sadness to Mme. de Chateaubriand, and disappointments might perhaps have ruined for ever her married life, if, as has rightly been remarked,⁴ the events of 1814 and 1815, by providing a political rôle for the writer, had not at the same time caused the unhappy wife a diversion and given her something with which to occupy her intelligent curiosity. Chateaubriand was at least unjust with regard to her. Mme. de Chateaubriand was a woman of sure judgment and of shrewd sense. Her account of the journey of the Court to Ghent during the Hundred Days is agreeably ironical. She wrote fairly well in a natural way, and her notes were not useless to the author of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*.⁵ It is easily understood for what reasons she pretended not to have read works which must in many places have wounded her private feelings so deeply. She loved her husband passion-

¹ Villemain, *M. de Chateaubriand*, p. 137. Quoted by Biré, *M.O.T.*, p. 307 note.

² See Paléologue, work quoted, p. 205.

³ Quoted by Paléologue, p. 207.

⁴ Paléologue, p. 214.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 249 and following.

ately. In 1818, at the time Chateaubriand fell in love with Mme. Récamier, she wrote in her diary: "M. de Chateaubriand is at Mass. I am afraid sometimes of seeing him mount heavenwards, for he is truly too perfect to live on this earth and too pure to be touched by death." Far from being independent, as she is sometimes represented, and far from discouraging her husband by her disconcerting irony, Mme. de Chateaubriand only seems to have been naïve. She was the victim, faithful nevertheless and always devoted, of a hopeless egoism and a perpetual inconstancy.

Pauline de Beaumont had only succeeded in subjugating for a time that inconstancy and that egoism by sheer force of devotion, sweetness, and grace. In the *salon* of the Rue Neuve-du-Luxembourg, where Chateaubriand, towards the year 1800, allowed himself to be admired with his wide forehead and his dark curly hair, it seemed at first as though he had put away his pride. The *Génie du Christianisme* was finished under the eyes of Mme. de Beaumont, in that house at Savigny-sur-Orge which inspired Chateaubriand in 1836 or 1837 with such charming memories.¹ In Rome, "thanks to a pity so tender and so delicate that she could take it for love, she possessed Chateaubriand entirely some days."² It is well known with what care he tended her until her death in November, 1803. In the little garden with its orange blossoms, the shelter of her last days,³ he went to see her each day, to encourage the last illusions of the charming "bird of passage." He took her for her last walk to the Coliseum, round by the ruins, "all decorated with brambles and columbine tinged with yellow by the autumn." He mourned sincerely over her last days, and when she died so gracefully, leaving him with a smile, he really felt great anguish. The pages which Chateaubriand wrote on the death of Mme. de Beaumont are admirably artistic and of the most touching tenderness. When Sainte-Beuve heard this passage of the *Mémoires* read for the first time at Mme. Récamier's he

¹ *M.O.T.*, II, p. 266 and following.

² De Lescure, *Chateaubriand*, p. 79.

³ See *M.O.T.*, II, p. 362 and following. A. de Vigny did not believe that Mme. de Beaumont loved Chateaubriand. He says so in a letter dated July 11th, 1850 (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, January 1st, 1897, p. 94).

reproached Chateaubriand¹ with having published, at the end of his account, that series of letters of condolence, which had “rather the same effect as conversation in a funeral carriage that is following the hearse.” He also appears, in spite of his reserves, to be reproaching Chateaubriand for this passage in a letter to Fontanes:² “My friend . . . died regretting that she had not given me all her fortune, but she was surprised by death and, as you can imagine, I am not a man to think of my own fortune and disturb the last moments of a dying friend.” Finally, and here his reasons are better, Sainte-Beuve, after giving briefly the episode of Charlotte, quotes³ with indignation this passage from the *Mémoires*:⁴ “Since that time I have only met with one attachment sufficiently elevated to inspire me with the same confidence.” In 1822, when he was writing in London the book of his great work in which these words, which are so cruel in their reticence, are to be found, had Chateaubriand forgotten, for the sake of Mme. Récamier, all the women who had spent themselves for him, and Mme. de Beaumont among the others? Sainte-Beuve believes so, and is indignant. Against “this man of many love affairs,” whom he no longer hesitates to call an egoist, he invokes all those shades of the élite, “Lucille, Pauline,” “the lady of Fervacques,” “the one of the gardens of Méréville” and “the one of the Château of Ussé”—all those ladies of former times whom Juliette had made him forget. We must not be as severe as this, for Chateaubriand remembered Mme. de Beaumont with great fidelity. He sold all that he had to pay part of the nine thousand francs which the tombstone for his friend cost him.⁵ Later on he never saw “Mme. de Beaumont’s cypress”⁶ without emotion. There is a letter from him to Mme. Récamier,⁷ in which he gives a touching souvenir of her. When he was Ambassador to Rome he went to pray on her tomb.⁸ Whatever may have been the details concerning his liaison with Pauline, and the book by M. Bardoux⁹ reveals to

¹ See *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 212, No. 1

² From Rome, November 8, 1803.

⁴ Vol. II, p. 137. ⁵ See *M.O.T.*, II, p. 377 and note 2.

⁷ September 16th, 1828. Compare *M.O.T.*, V, p. 20, and VI, p. 168.

⁸ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 29.

³ *Causeries du Lundi*, II, p. 151.

⁶ *Ibid.*, III, p. 7.

⁹ *Mme. de Beaumont*, Paris, 1884.

us a great deal about this, Chateaubriand was faithful this time and did not forget.

The question is, was it the same with regard to the others, all those women whom Sainte-Beuve half mentions, and who form a sort of starry crown around the name of Chateaubriand? We know who they were now. The "lady of Fervaques" was the Marquise de Custine, who had "inherited the long hair of Marguerite de Provence."¹ She had bought the domain of Fervaques, or Fervacques, from two of Mme. Récamier's friends, the Duc de Montmorency-Laval and the Duchesse de Luynes. The "lady of the Méréville gardens" we know too. Méréville was an oasis created by the smile of a Muse, but one of those Muses that the Gaulois poets call "learned fairies."² The banker, de la Borde, who had made a sumptuous dwelling of this Château, left it to his daughter who married the Comte de Noailles, afterwards Duc de Mouchy. The "lady of the Château of Ussé" was that Duchesse de Duras who took Chateaubriand under her protection at the commencement of the Restoration, and whom he soon called "my sister."³

These women were alive at the time when Mme. de Staél was dying and Chateaubriand met Mme. Récamier again at her house. It is interesting, therefore, to us to know something of his intercourse with them, and what were his sentiments as far as they were concerned. About Mme. de Custine he has not told us much himself. When speaking of her death in 1826,⁴ he says: "Read what I have written before, and what I shall write later on, about all that I have the happiness or the misfortune to remember with regard to the memory of Mme. de Custine." *Before*, there is scarcely anything except the mention of a visit to Fervacques in 1803 or 1804,⁵ and the account of a dinner with Fouché, after the Hundred Days, at Mme. de Custine's.⁶ *Later on* there is a passage in which he quotes the Marquise among the women who "wished him well;"⁷ then there is something about the Château of Fervacques and the bedroom of Henri IV,⁸ and a

¹ *M.O.T.*, II, p. 297.

² *Ibid.*, II, p. 468 and note 4.

³ *Ibid.*, III, pp. 459 and 460.

⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, p. 328.

⁵ *Ibid.*, II, p. 297 and following.

⁶ *Ibid.*, III, p. 520 and following.

⁷ *Ibid.*, V, p. 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 51.

somewhat cold remark about the death of Bex : "She was celebrated at the revolutionary court of justice on account of her long hair."¹ That is all, and it certainly is very little for transmitting to posterity the memory of a woman whom Sainte-Beuve mentioned² with Mmes. de la Fayette, de Caylus, d'Houdetot, d'Épinay, de Beaumont, when he wanted to give an idea of "French love" or "tender friendship." Since Chateaubriand we have learnt more, and his intercourse with Mme. de Custine has been very much discussed. One writer is very hard on him in reference to this affair ;³ another, with about forty of Chateaubriand's letters, endeavours to rehabilitate him,⁴ whilst a third writer also declares himself more favourable to René. What is certain is that, at the time when Mme. de Beaumont was dying at Rome,⁵ Chateaubriand applied to Mme. de Custine for a loan of money, which she refused, no doubt through jealousy. Mme. de Custine was indiscreet enough to let the public know this detail. Chateaubriand wrote her a letter very polite in form, but somewhat hard and certainly very clever. Their intercourse was not interrupted by this incident, for the intimacy between Chateaubriand and Mme. de Custine was never greater than in 1805 and 1806.⁶ There is reason to believe that it caused her suffering at times, judging by this cruel expression in one of her letters to Chênedollé :⁷ "I am more foolish than ever . . . and more unhappy than I can tell you. The *Génie* [Chateaubriand] is delighted about seeing you. He sympathizes with you in your trouble, and when he talks of you one would be tempted to believe that he had a kind heart." Mme. de Custine, it is true, was not always in a very sweet humour ; she was sulky and jealous ; but Chateaubriand, with his brusqueness, his caprice, and his

¹ *M.O.T.*, p. 223.

² *Causeries du Lundi*, IX, p. 336, note 1. See, in *Chateaubriand et son groupe littéraire*, II, p. 324, the curious letter from M. de Custine to Sainte-Beuve on this subject.

³ Bardoux, work quoted.

⁴ Chédieu de Robethon, *Chateaubriand et Mme. de Custine*, Paris, Plon, 1893. See pp. 61 and 62.

⁵ Biré's edition of *M.O.T.*, II, p. 568 and following.

⁶ Chédieu, p. 145.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 147. This is not quite the text given by Sainte-Beuve, *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 323. The sense is the same, but the letter, as Sainte-Beuve gives it, is still more passionate.

changeableness, made the women whom he kept kneeling at his feet suffer cruelly at times. When he started for the East, Mme. de Custine was broken-hearted. "It is all over," she wrote to Chênedollé.¹ When he returned she only found in him a devoted friend. She went herself, though, in 1811, to Switzerland and Italy, where, like Juliette Récamier, she was friendly with Canova.² The intercourse between Mme. de Custine and Chateaubriand gradually slackened, and it was never again what it had been in the days when René wrote her such charming nonsense, and when she sent him that reply which Chênedollé has copied and Sainte-Beuve has published, and which contained these two phrases: "I could not help being surprised that, in the midst of your long enumeration, there should not be a word about the grotto and the little room ornamented with two superb myrtles. It seems to me that this should not have been forgotten so quickly."³

About Chateaubriand's intercourse with the Comtesse de Noailles, later on Duchesse de Mouchy, information is less definite. It is known, though, that she is referred to in a page from henceforth celebrated in the first *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*.⁴ It was for her that Chateaubriand went in search of "glory" "to the tomb of Christ." He went to find her "at the Alhambra." "If I get a moment's stolen happiness," he wrote later on, "it is disturbed by the memory of those fascinating days of enchantment and delirium." The *Souvenirs* of Baron Hyde de Neuville⁵ throw some light on these allusions. Mme. de Noailles, the one who is known as the beautiful Nathalie, had been travelling for about six months in Spain, when Hyde de Neuville was introduced to her. She was accompanied by her children. She was no longer in the first freshness of youth, but she had retained all

¹ Chédieu, p. 155. Sainte-Beuve, *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 324.

² *Ibid.*, p. 174.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 104. Sainte-Beuve, work quoted, II, p. 322.

⁴ See specially the article by Jules Troubat, *Sainte-Beuve et les Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, *Revue d'hist. litt. de la France*, 1900, p. 382 and following; see too the celebrated article by Sainte-Beuve on *Chateaubriand romanesque et amoureux*, *Causeries du Lundi*, II, p. 143 and following.

⁵ Vol. I, p. 444 and following. Compare Biré's edition of *M.O.T.*, II, p. 602 and following.

her grace, "her charming features and that pensive and touching expression which adds so much to beauty." She talked all the time about Chateaubriand, and only consoled herself for his absence by sketching the monuments left by the Moors. "It was," adds Hyde de Neuville, "through the great enthusiasm of Mme. de Noailles for these Moorish remains that Chateaubriand was inspired for the charming story he has called *Le Dernier Abencérage*. The *Bianca* of it is certainly the faithful image of the sweet Nathalie, and in the description of that graceful and noble dance in which he paints the daughter of Spain, I have often thought I saw again our mutual friend, who delighted us many times by trying the fascinating dances of the country which we were visiting together." Chateaubriand arrived at Cadiz in the beginning of April, 1807, and went to Cordova, where Mme. de Noailles had just installed herself. Later on he read, at Méréville, the *Dernier des Abencérages* and the first volume of the *Itinéraire*.¹ It was on this occasion that the Duchesse de Mouchy introduced René to the Duchesse de Duras.² Mme. de Mouchy kept her privileges for some time still. Towards the end of the Empire, Chateaubriand, writing to Mme. de Duras, says to her: "Mme. de Mouchy knows that I love her, that nothing could make me indifferent to her. . . . Sure as she thus is of me, she does not forbid me to see you, nor to write to you, nor even to go to Ussé with or without her. If she were to order it, no doubt she would be obeyed."³ But gradually his ingratitude got the better of him. In March, 1812, he dared to write that he had not yet, at the age he then was, been able to win a heart of which he was sure.⁴ His intercourse with Méréville began to slacken; a fresh candidateship tempted him, and he now went to Ussé. The day came when he owned to the Duchesse de Duras: "I loved Mme. de Mouchy passionately at one time."⁵ The *pauvre mouche* (poor fly), as her friends called her, was deserted, and nothing impeaches Chateaubriand more than the sad letter written by her to Mme. de Duras. It is her last farewell. "Talk of me

¹ *M.O.T.*, II, p. 468.

² See Bardoux, *La Duchesse de Duras*, p. 90 and following.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 103 and 104. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 113. ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

sometimes," she says, "so that I may not be too much slighted and forgotten. If our friend remembers me I am sure he will pity me and love my memory. Adieu. Be happy and your sweet daughters too. May those who have had any friendship for me be reminded of me when with you!"¹

The Duchesse de Duras was better armed for defending herself. She was an ardent and lively woman, well-educated, kind and simple, with a very sagacious mind enriched by meditation. She only became an authoress towards 1820. Up to that time she had scarcely written, except under the dictation of Chateaubriand or of Mme. de Staél. Sainte-Beuve, who knew her well, makes of her a "true sister of the author of *Delphine*."² Lamartine, who never saw her, or at any rate not at her own home, but who knew of her idolatry for Chateaubriand, defined her very well as "a lavish soul consuming itself like a lamp in the night to illuminate a man's name."³ A daughter of a member of the National Convention and wife of the first Lord of the Chamber, the Duchesse de Duras, through her influence in the different political parties, had helped Chateaubriand greatly. Her *salon*, at the same time monarchic, liberal, and constitutional, was, before the days of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, a temple in which he was the god. At the time of the first Restoration it was through her that Chateaubriand was appointed Ambassador to Stockholm.⁴ He had not time to get to this post, but he found Mme. de Duras at Ghent. He spent three months with her, "talking of all that honest hearts and minds can find to talk of in a conformity of tastes, ideas, principles, and sentiments."⁵ Chateaubriand appears to have been specially grateful to Mme. de Duras for the high opinion she had of his political worth and of his character. "A man," he says, "protects you through what he is worth, a woman through what you are worth."⁶ Mme. de Duras was at times somewhat agitated. She had not the tranquillity of the good Duchesse de Lévis, who was also very fond of Chateaubriand, and whom he

¹ Bardoux, *La Duchesse de Duras*, p. 211.

² See the portrait of Mme. de Duras in the *Portr. de femmes*, p. 62 and following.

³ *Cours familier de littérature*, IX, p. 45.

⁴ *M.O.T.*, III, p. 460.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 498.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

thought of later on as he would of "a quiet autumn evening."¹ At times Mme. de Duras, like Mme. de Staél, became excitable, and Chateaubriand was then somewhat hard. We know this by the details of their correspondence and their story.² We know it, too, from Chateaubriand and from that confession in his *Mémoires*: "Ever since I lost that person who was so generous . . . , " he says, "I have never ceased, when mourning her, to reproach myself for the variableness with which I must at times have distressed hearts which were devoted to me. We ought to watch over our character. We should remember that, with the deepest attachment, we may none the less poison lives which we would willingly redeem at the price of our very blood. When our friends have gone down to the tomb what means have we for making up for our faults? Are our useless regrets and our vain repentance any remedy for the suffering we caused them? They would have preferred a smile from us during their life to all our tears after their death."³

The avowal is complete. It would be a mistake to dwell on it, and perhaps indequate to bring once more an accusation against Chateaubriand which his friends themselves spared him. But this preface was necessary to the history of the love affair of Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier. It was necessary to know how the prodigal had hitherto squandered his affection, or at least what were the probabilities of his attachment.⁴ His was a singularly complex soul, not tarnished but weary, a heart that suffered and repented by turns, a mind peopled by memory's ghosts that he offered to Juliette Récamier. He was in that painful and disagreeable state which the letter from Serenus to Seneca defined: *nec aegroto, nec valeo*.⁵ It was the year 1818, and he was fifty years of age. This was about the age of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld when he asked the Comtesse de la Fayette to cure the misanthropy that was wearing him away. Chateaubriand had, perhaps, some features of resemblance with the author of the *Maximes*—so furious, so passionate in his

¹ *M.O.T.*, p. 518.

² See the book by Bardoux already quoted.

³ *M.O.T.*, III, p. 499.

⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, p. 373.

⁵ Commencement of the *De tranquillitate animi*.

youth, so bitter towards his decline, and always so complex, so vain, so egotistical, so changeable. Had not the La Rochefoucauld of the *Mémoires* announced, so to speak, the Chateaubriand of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*? . . . Mme. Récamier appears to us like a second Mme. de la Fayette, indulgent, practical, an optimist on the whole. For thirty years she was to endeavour, almost daily, to soothe and calm a man of genius who could not forgive life for having been less fertile than his imagination, less rich than his intelligence.

On the 8th of September, 1817, the Duchesse de Duras, when writing to Mme. Swetchine, said to her of Chateaubriand : “ His money matters are arranged, that gives me real joy ; he is now independent, thank Heaven. There is nothing political in the arrangements. I found him in a better mood, gentler, and having given up the idea of that terrible expatriation. What has done him all this good is that he has continued the *Mémoires de sa vie*.¹ He has told about the seven or eight years of his youth, from the age of twelve until he entered on his service ; the first ventures of his talent ; his reveries in the Combourg woods, and then the story of which René is the poem. It is charming to read, *but I hope he will not be induced* to read it to anyone else but to me. I should be very sorry for many reasons. According to his present idea, these *Mémoires* are not to appear until fifty years after his death. I do not mind how many years afterwards, if only they are not published during his lifetime.”² On the 29th of January, 1818, there is a fresh letter from the same person to the same person : “ M. de Chateaubriand has broken a muscle of his leg, so for the next forty days he will be on his sofa. I go to see him, but you cannot imagine what a void it makes in my life not to see him for one or two hours every morning in this room, thinking aloud with me. It kills me with sadness.”³ On the

¹ It was in December, 1803, that Chateaubriand, who was then in Rome, spoke for the first time to his friend Joubert about the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*. See the article by Louis Séché on *Les manuscrits des M.O.T.*, p. 315.

² *Mme. Swetchine, sa vie et ses œuvres*, by Comte de Falloux, I, p. 213.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

2nd of February another letter: "If M. de Chateaubriand were to be ill long I should become ministerial through the tiresomeness and want of reason of those who are around him."¹ In 1818, Chateaubriand founded *Le Conservateur* with Lamennais, Bonald, and Grenoude.² He also published his *Remarques sur les affaires du moment*.³ From October, 1810, to March, 1820, he gave the *Journal des Débats* those articles which are collected in the 26th volume of his *Oeuvres complètes*.⁴ The idea of *Le Conservateur* was to be a counter-balance to the liberal influence of *La Minerve*. Montmorency shared in this enterprise. At this time Chateaubriand was ultra-monarchic and ultramontane. He was attacked severely and on all sides.⁵

Mathieu de Montmorency had spent some time with Mme. Récamier at the Vallée-aux-Loups. His somewhat jealous affection was rather disturbed with regard to those whom he termed "the new friends," and he wrote a long letter to Juliette on the subject.

“FOREST CHÂTEAU, June 6th, 1818.

"It is not quite four days ago since I left that charming lonely valley. It was not without a certain pang at my heart. You were not well, and I felt some dread of not seeing you again there, established in this way which is so pleasant and agreeable to me. This idea haunted me all the way to Dampierre along the Rambouillet and Châteaudun road and to the depths of my great forest, where I have been ever since yesterday. The solitude here seems to increase the distance. No news of you since Tuesday, but I cannot complain yet, although I am already pained by it. What about our great mutual interests as tenants, our hopes, which are too uncertain, unfortunately, as joint landlords, the visits of our third partner to the notary, your answers to the celebrated landlord

¹ *Mme. Swetchine, sa vie et ses œuvres*, by Comte de Falloux, I, p. 228.

² *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 152 and following.

³ Paris, Lenormant, 1818, in-8°, 36 pages.

⁴ Edit. 1826. See specially the article of June 7th, 1819, on *Politicians*, Kerviler, *Bio. bibl.*, p. 36 and following.

⁵ See the *Petit manuel à l'usage des hommes monarchiques et immobiles*, ou *M. de Chateaubriand peint par lui-même*. Paris, Delaunay, 1819, in-8°, 24 pages.

and his replies, the reflections of M. Récamier, which my eloquent letter provoked? I did not fail to write on arriving at Dampierre. He must have received my letter on Thursday, and will certainly have sent it to you. In short, what will become of all our great interests? I trust them to a kind Providence before all, to your sweet prudence, which quite rightly desires to conciliate all things, and at the same time to the desire which I am sure you share about an arrangement which seemed so suitable on account of our friendship and our mutual sentiments and regrets, and which seemed to promise us some sweet moments of conciliation. Do as you think best. I shall adhere to all that the great wisdom of M. Récamier decides and to your reasonable and delicate resolution to do nothing that he disapproves. The friend whom we regret came to me in my solitude; you ought to have come too. I think of her and of you; I should like to stroll with you in one of our great avenues. Ah, I am quite right in being implacable with regard to the new friends. Only those who are associated with old and deeply rooted memories are worthy of that name. Forgive me then my intolerance. Think of me; tell me about yourself and about your Dieppe plans. Above all take care of yourself, I implore you. See your doctor, and accept once more my very loving homage.—
MONT.”¹

It is in this same year, 1818, that the following curious letter from Mathieu must be placed. It is from the Forest Château, and is only dated “July 30th, evening”:

“The solitary forest does not make me forget the hermitage in a little valley, which must have been inhabited for the last seven days by friendship or by a pretty convalescent. . . . I go about a great deal and work a little. I think of my friends, and also of the one whom unfortunately we shall never again see here. I am very much taken up with the news from Spain and with the Corunna affair, about which there is only a first hint in the last newspaper. . . . I count

¹ Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency. No. 86 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. Address, Madame Récamier, 32 Rue Basse du Rempart, Paris. Post-mark June 9th, 1818.

on your perfect discretion in not receiving the former landlord too often. Tell me, though, what he thinks of my slight changes and additions. What can I tell you more about my great trees, my solitary musings, a frequent subject of which you can very well guess? Adieu, adieu again, and a thousand loving homages.”¹

Mme. Récamier went to spend a few days at Dieppe. It was from there that she wrote in a very kind way to Paul David.

“(DIEPPE) July 11th (1818).²

“ You will be very unjust, my dear Paul, if you do not believe that I was very much touched by your letter and your devoted friendship for me. I only wish that this friendship might make you happier, that you had more confidence in mine, and that you would avoid all that might cause any constraint between us. My health is very uncertain all the time. Mad. de Barante has been here the last few days with her sister. I like them very much, and I shall stay a few days longer on account of them. They are kind, charming persons. They live at a little house which is quite rustic, outside the town. Mad. de Barante was at the window of this kind of thatched cottage yesterday, looking as beautiful as an angel. We all go out together, and yesterday we stayed on the beach to watch the sunset. It was a delightful evening, and we began to say pretty things which had not precisely the merit of novelty, but which helped us to spend a pleasant evening.”³

In 1818 Mme. Récamier went for the season to Aix-la-Chapelle, where she saw Prince Augustus of Prussia again.⁴ At that date she was not very intimate with Chateaubriand. Ballanche, alone in the great city, was building all his hopes

¹ Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency. No. 87 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. No address.

² The date is from the post-mark.

³ Letters to Paul David. No. 15 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. No signature.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 307.

on the first letter he would receive from his friend.¹ He went out for a stroll along the quays, watching "the great white bands" of clouds, and he felt "like a man at the edge of a precipice." He thought of Mme. Récamier, but he had seen her weighed down with sadness at the time of her departure, and this prevented his thoughts from being any stay to him.

"I, who wanted so much to see you go away," he wrote, "I did not know what it meant. What I am writing to you this evening, all alone here, will only be seen by you in five days. What you tell me about yourself will have altered by the time I read it. I hope at least that your health will improve, and that your poor nerves will let you have a little tranquillity. Remember that I am here like a sentinel, and that at the slightest sign from you I should start, either to bring you a little consolation in your sadness or to accompany you back. Remember that I should think myself only too happy if, by going much more than a hundred leagues, I might spare you the very slightest pain. I would buy with my life one of the hairs of your head."²

He endeavoured to go on working in order to finish what he had commenced. He published his *Essai sur les institutions sociales*, one of his works in which J. J. Ampère later on found "the boldest and most varied animation of mind."³ The book passed almost unnoticed outside the circle of Ballanche's friends. André-Marie Ampère was indignant about this. "Ballanche," he wrote to Bredin on the 18th of May, 1818, "is fine in his sentiments, thoughts, and style. As I scarcely see anyone, I do not know what impression he makes on others. Those with whom I wanted to talk about

¹ "I went to see the worthy Ballanche in his boudoir. I fancy he is pining there during your absence. One of the privations that this absence imposes on me is that I very rarely see this excellent man. . . ."—Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency to Mme. R., August 14th, 1818.

² Unpublished and undated letter. It is addressed to Mme. Récamier, Aix-la-Chapelle, and is in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. "Be persuaded," he says in another unpublished letter of August 8th, "that I should like to be able to put wadding under the wheels of your carriage to spare you all the jolts of the journey."

³ J. J. Ampère, *Ballanche*, p. 61. See also Laprade, *Ballanche*, p. 28 and following. Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 27 and following, quotes a curious letter from De Maistre to Ballanche.

his work did not know of its existence. I am angry with everyone that there should be so little said about it. Did you read an account of it in the *Journal du commerce*? The article is by a man from Lyons, M. Lemontey.¹ In the *Journal des Débats* Nodier rendered justice to the author of the *Essai*.

With a very vivid presentiment of the dangers which threatened Mme. Récamier, Ballanche once more advised her to turn her attention to somewhat general studies. It was for this that he kept her informed with regard to foreign politics. He told her of the intentions that public opinion gave to the Powers on the subject of their troops. It was at the time when it was feared that the sovereigns would want to keep the strongholds. "At present," added Ballanche, "the actors are all studying their *rôles* almost around you. You would do well to see the rehearsals now and again before the day when the play is given. You know how much I believe in your moral influence in all things. No one dare say anything evil before you, and when one does not dare to say evil things, one comes near to thinking no evil things either."² He also advised her not to give herself up too much to solitude, but to read, to study Italian poetry, and not to allow herself to be taken up by other people's sentiments.

Mme. Récamier rarely wrote, and "her poor shadow complained of this." The worthy Ballanche, however, was never tired of writing to her, and he tried to find means to divert the woman who was everything to him. "It seems likely," he wrote to her on the 12th of August,³ "that you will see the entrance of the Congress which is to settle the destinies of Europe. It will be one memory more for you, and you have not gone out of your way for it. Circumstances have always come to you, just as the Bayadères go and dance in front of a master lying on his divan." Prince Augustus had left, and Mme. Récamier was staying a little longer than she had intended. Ballanche would have liked

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 140-141.

² Unpublished letter without date. Address, Mme. Récamier, Aix-la-Chapelle. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection, addressed to Mme. Récamier, Aix-la-Chapelle.

to go to her, but he did not dare yield to this temptation. He explained his scruples in a letter dated September 2nd. "Your friends would have thought it quite simple if I had accompanied you, but perhaps they might not think it as simple if I were to go on my own account now to you. I have not said anything which might help me to acquire any certitude about this suspicion, so that it is merely a suspicion. It is a terrible thing to be always imprisoned in spiders' webs."¹

We have no replies from Mme. Récamier to Ballanche. There are only several letters from her to Paul David at this epoch. Two days after her arrival she wrote to him as follows :

"AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, August 5th.

"Thank you for your letter, my dear Paul. I see very well that we shall not have the house, and in my mood to be annoyed at everything, I am very much annoyed at this disappointment. I reached Aix-la-Chapelle in the evening, the day before yesterday. Prince Augustus arrived here the evening before, quite by chance, as my last letters were addressed to him at Spa, and he had not received them. He has fallen back into his old ways, and I am very much touched by this, but also embarrassed, and my nerves are in such a condition that I am annoyed and agitated at everything. In short, I am in a wretched state of mind, and shall be glad when this is over."²

Mathieu gave her news of the "Val des loups," and, like the worthy Ballanche, he was uneasy about the moral and physical welfare of Juliette.

"From what place could I write to you, sweet friend, rather than from this solitary valley, one of the charms of which is that you like it, and that it belongs partly to you, this valley which reminds me of moments, very sweet to friendship, which were spent with you, and which gives me the hope of seeing them renewed. I have come to try the

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection, addressed to Mme. Récamier, Aix-la-Chapelle.

² M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. Letters to Paul David. No. 25, unsigned.

effect of being a landed proprietor, and am spending a week here with my mother, who enjoys the garden, which is so well planned, and indeed the whole visit. The faithful Baptiste came, in reply to my invitation and the arrangements agreed upon with the wise Ballanche, and handed over to François your little household affairs which are very useful to me for the simple dinner, and of which we are taking the greatest care. I do not know what temperature you are having at your watering-place, but we are stifled here. The poor grass of our valley is very much scorched. The gardener assures us that it will recover in the autumn—that means for you, and in your presence. . . . Sweet friend, I must also talk to you of Aix-la-Chapelle and of the visitors that you have perhaps already had there. There is one about whom I fear that you are not entirely frank. Tell me something about this, and about what you are told is being prepared. I am very curious on this subject, and particularly with regard to what interests you.”¹

Adrien de Montmorency wrote from Madrid, on the 14th August, 1818, to Aix-la-Chapelle, a letter of witty bantering :

“I heard indirectly about your journey to the sea, and now you have rushed off to Aix-la-Chapelle, where you will be nearly the only person caring for your health. I can assure you, my very dear friend, that I am very much concerned about your health, and I do not know anything in which my heart and even my eyes are more interested. You are the person in the world who makes the pain, the emptiness, and all the ills of absence the most felt. . . . I, who have certainly never denied your empire, I consider that you are the sixth of the Powers who are about to meet at Aix-la-Chapelle. I do not doubt that, languid and melancholy though you may feel, you will nevertheless receive the highest of all society. I do not doubt even that, with all the tact and good taste which are your specialities, you will have a few royal flirtations. You do not tell me anything about all this, as you never let your confidences go travelling, but I

¹ Unpublished letter. No. 88 of the collection. August 5th, 1818.

hope that the indiscreet gazettes will tell us about your charms and their power.”¹

Prince Augustus, whom Mme. Récamier now met again, and with whom also she had never entirely ceased to correspond, began once more his entreaties.² Juliette was not well; she was very nervous and agitated, and the water treatment added to her fatigue. She received this fresh homage of persevering affection with pleasure, but she endeavoured to protect herself from the “vivacity” which the Prince put into it. She begged him to shorten his stay there, and persuaded him to start for Paris, assuring him that she would meet him again there and that he should be admitted to the Vallée-aux-Loups. She herself delayed her departure from Aix-la-Chapelle under the pretext of the bad state of her health. The following letter from Mme. Récamier to Paul David confirms and gives clearly these indications :

“August 29th.

“Have the kindness to send to the Prussian Ambassador and ask for the address of Prince Augustus, who is to arrive in Paris on the 2nd of September, and then let him have the enclosed letter as promptly as possible. I do not yet know when I shall return to Paris. The doctor wants me to continue the baths. They tire me horribly, and increase my present disposition of worrying about everything. I can assure you that if this had to continue I would a thousand times rather die, as life is nothing but a series of tortures. Prince Augustus was perfect to me, but in his affection there is a sort of vivacity with which I can do nothing, and which disturbs our intercourse. I should be the most ungrateful of creatures, though, if I were not deeply touched by his attentions to me. He stayed here in spite of me. I thought it was bad taste to prolong his stay. I fancied, and perhaps exaggerated, all kinds of objections—in short, instead of

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection.

² On the 13th of June, 1818, Prince Augustus wrote to Mme. Récamier from Berlin telling her that he had already given the necessary orders so that he might be at Aix-la-Chapelle towards the middle of July.

enjoying his friendship I was tortured by it. I am no good to anyone. I do not know how to get through life; I suffer in a thousand different ways; I torment myself and I torment all who care for me.”¹

On the 8th of September, 1818, Mathieu de Montmorency communicated to Mme. Récamier the result of a conversation with Augustus of Prussia :

“The last few days, sweet friend, I have been wanting to answer your nice kind letter of the 21st. I heard of the arrival in Paris of the traveller about whom you told me. I was at first infinitely grateful to him and to you. I thought these arrangements perfectly reasonable and as they should be for both of you. My admiration is somewhat less keen since my conversation yesterday, and I will tell you at once why. I needed to have this conversation, though, before writing to you. I thought he would give me more recent and direct news about your health and your plans. I called on him, but he was not in, and I could not see him until yesterday at a house where I knew he was to dine. We at once began to talk, not of France, I can assure you, neither of Germany nor of Europe, but of you, and only of you. I saw, without requiring much perspicacity, that he had started under the persuasion that you would soon take the road to Paris, where you would meet him again; that he was afraid of any delay or change in your plans, and that he was very much disturbed in his mind about this. I confess that he gave me several reasons in favour of your return and against your staying any longer at the watering-place. I was, perhaps, naturally inclined to find these reasons good myself, but they did really appear right and excellent. You know what they were, you can guess them; the wrong motives which may be imputed to you, the things and the society into which you may be led in spite of yourself, etc. . . . Finally, we only found that your health, about which we talked three-quarters of the time that our conversation lasted, might require

¹ M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS. No. 18 of the letters to Paul David, unsigned.

urgently that you should take more of the baths, or, what I should fear still more, that it might not allow you to start on the journey yet. I was not satisfied with what he told me with regard to all this.

“Do all you can for the best, and do take care of yourself, I beg of you. As you know, this is my refrain. It was then agreed between the traveller and me that I should write to you in the sense in which I am writing—that is, to beg you to come back as soon as possible. I saw that he attached great importance to this, and that he considered that his friendship should have some influence. I will not answer for it that, when once you arrive, you will not sometimes hear me object to the perpetuity of his stay, especially in a certain valley which is *ours* and in spite of what you say about the absence of *all impropriety*, and in spite of your modest fear that he may find it dull at your house. But I am carrying out my promise, and so far I am of his opinion.”¹

A fresh note from Mme. Récamier to Paul David, dated from Aix-la-Chapelle, September 25th, 1818, proves to us that the incident did not terminate without storms.²

“Do not be angry at my silence, dear Paul. I am in a hurricane of scenes which turn my head; kind Ballanche tries to calm me as much as he can. We are certainly leaving October 1st. It would be affectation to start before. Have faith in my friendship. My health is better on the whole, but all this agitation does me harm.”³

Mme. Récamier returned to Paris, and settled down to her usual life in her flat in the Rue d’Anjou-Saint-Honoré. Towards the end of 1818, we find her in correspondence with the Duchesse de Luynes. She was sending her the new books

¹ Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency. No. 92 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. No address.

² Seeing that Mme. Récamier did not join him in Paris, Prince Augustus, according to his letter of September 10th, returned to Aix-la-Chapelle. He did not leave Aix until September 29th. See letters Nos. 73 and 75 of the collection quoted. Juliette made fresh promises in order to persuade him to leave.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

to Dampierre. The Duchesse replies to her on the 3rd of December, 1818: ". . . I have not yet read the work by the worthy Ballanche. I really only know it by what M. de Montey [sic] says of it, and his criticism amused me very much. As to *Bélisaire*, I have read it all through and consider this work bad, and very bad, particularly on account of its enthusiasm for Bunuoparte [sic] and for all that concerns the Liberals. Besides, except for the rôle of *Bélisaire*, which is fine, the others are very weak, and the poetry also. Altogether this tragedy is mediocre. The *Dedication* is still more extravagant than all that is to be seen of this kind every day."¹ When once she was in Paris again, Mme. Récamier met once more her new friend, M. de Chateaubriand, who was from henceforth to take the precedence of all the others.

How the older friends of Mme. Récamier endured the sudden introduction into her life of this egoist of a genius, how they accepted this event which was, as it has been said, "the invasion of a hawk into an aviary in which harmonious birds were warbling tranquilly around a dove"²—all this is not the least interesting of the problems suggested by Mme. Récamier's history, which is so rich in moral incidents.

Ballanche was more affected by it than anyone else, and he certainly had a right to be so, on account of his affection, which was delicate and so apart from all vulgar interest. His first impulse was to withdraw. The melancholy avowal of his powerlessness to preserve Juliette from the storms that threatened her can be read in this short note, so charming in its reserve: "I am distressed by yesterday's conversation. I quite felt that I was hurting you without doing any good. I do not know, but it seems to me that I cannot do anything for your peace, for your happiness, or even for your diversion. I fancy, then, that I should do well to go away. We will talk about all this, but try not to introduce a third person into our conversation. My destiny is of very little importance; do not take too much interest in it. It is possible that it may be accomplished. I would very willingly be resigned if only I could see you in a calmer and more peaceful situation.

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² John Lemoinne, *Journal des Débats*, November 24th, 1859.

I will go with you to Mass. I suppose it is the service at noon, so I will be with you a few moments before then.”¹

This state of discouragement could not last, and Ballanche very soon felt it to be his duty to insist with all his force in diverting his friend’s mind, which was in much too agitated a state. From the 11th of February, 1819, his letters continue day after day.² What he wished above all things was to get Juliette back to regular habits. We will let him speak for himself.

“ *February 11th.*

“ I have never wished more earnestly to see you take up some occupation. It is all in vain that you tell me that you cannot; I shall not be convinced of this until you have seriously tried. I cannot believe that what there is noble, high-minded, and delicate in your soul would not find its way into your writings if you cared to write. Style would come by itself. Too many examples prove to us that talent finds its resources and its means elsewhere than in the soul. Show us a talent that has nothing artificial, nothing prepared, made up, or conventional about it. Your candid impressions about people, literature, or anything you like to choose, would be charming. You only need a background of some kind for placing the expression of your sentiments. The sad circumstances in the midst of which you find yourself are undoubtedly an obstacle to regular work, to a life with fixed hours, but that is not very necessary. I do little, but still I do something without imposing upon myself any task. It is true that, thanks to you, I shall have to give up these desultory ways. Your wishes are laws which I have no desire to escape. But my poor life is only a reflection of yours. Allow yourself some calm, and I should then have some too; give yourself rest, and rest would then come to me quite naturally. Regulate your life, and mine would be regulated by that. I have no destiny of my own. As soon as I see your future diverging from mine, I see

¹ Unpublished note, not dated, in M. Ch. de Loménié’s MSS.

² From February 11th to the 28th there is only the letter of the 22nd missing in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection. To these may be added those of March 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 14th, 16th, 17th, 21st, 26th, and 28th. All these letters, fragments of which we are about to quote, are addressed to Mme. Récamier, 31 Rue d’Anjou-Saint-Honoré.

myself remaining without any future. All my ideas are with you and depend on you, because you have all my sentiments. What I tell you now must not impose any real constraint on you; it is for me to follow your destiny and not for you to obey mine, because I have not any, because you are a creature of a very much superior order to me. The best thing in me consists in having been able to appreciate you so quickly.”¹

Ballanche had persuaded Mme. Récamier into translating Petrarch.² He overcame her scruples one after another when she was discouraged and complained of the insufficiency of her means of expression. “I am convinced,” he wrote to her,³ “that the French language will in the end obey you; it could not hold out against the charm of your thoughts and sentiments. It will finally be quite delighted and quite proud at having yielded to so sweet a magic.” But Juliette’s discouragement sprang from absolute weariness, from a kind of spleen, which for a time made her avoid any kind of active life, and it showed itself in constant restlessness and distressing sadness. The moralist was then anxious about this agitation, and reprimanded her mildly.

“I should like to be able to enlighten you about this kind of sadness. I should like to be able to tell you that there is something within you which could master it and conquer it. It is for this ill that occupation is necessary. It is a sadness without any charm, and in which it is impossible to delight, you, less than anyone else. I do not propose to you that you should seek for strength outside yourself; it is within yourself that you ought to find it. Two or three turns in the garden tire you, a conversation about your future makes you feel discouraged. I am not insane enough nor yet unjust enough not to take into consideration your poor health, and also the uncertainty you are in with regard to your existence. Sow a few outside thoughts in the infinite fields of your imagination I should like you to put into some composition

¹ Unpublished letter.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 307, “Fragments of this translation are among Mme. Récamier’s papers, written for the most part by herself.”

³ Unpublished letter of February 12th, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

that which has made you so really beautiful ; I should like people to be able to read you as they have been able to admire you. In a word, I should like people to read your beauty, if it is permissible to speak thus. Why should you not do some day what Mme. de Staél did in *Corinne*? A person who has such memories ought to leave some for mankind. You know, nothing is lost within you, and that is a reason why you ought to survive yourself. It is impossible that a white marble tomb should contain the whole of you.”¹

The conversion was not an easy one, and the progress was not quickly seen. In reality Ballanche was no less disturbed than his friend.² The two suffering souls appealed to each other for encouragement ; they both needed each other, and, profound as the convictions of the philosopher were, his ardent imagination exposed him to more than one danger. Music for an hour, three hours given up to reading and literary work, such was the programme he recommended to his friend for “improving” the time and preparing a fresh life. In this way she would be employing her faculties instead of turning them against herself. But he himself was affected by all saddening influences, and was very much disposed to give way to his natural inclination to spleen. He next took refuge in mysticism, and endeavoured to win Juliette over to it. “We are nothing on this earth,” he said to her, “but strangers exiled from our true country, and you, the noblest of the strangers, must regret the most that country. Do not be surprised that you should feel so greatly the burden of exile. Do not imagine that it will be possible for you to find, on this earth, the delights and the repose of your true country. It is this mistake that has caused you such torture. Resign yourself to weariness and disgust.”³

¹ Unpublished letter of February 14th, 1819, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

² See the letter in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 310 and following. It is dated February 15th (1819). The last part, from “My destiny is my own,” is in the letter of February 16th. The phrase “Privileged creature . . .” is in the letter of February 17th.

³ Unpublished letter of February 17th, 1819, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

In the following letters allusions begin to appear : "Reign, and reign in peace, in the sphere of ideas and sentiments in which God has placed you, and do not seek elsewhere alliances with the heads of empires, with the kings of unknown kingdoms."¹ "Your irresistible attraction for perfumes inclines you to surround yourself with flowers, but you know very well that flowers are bad for your nerves."² "This world has never been a comfortable place to live in, but beside that we came at a bad time. There is a general uneasiness which is pitiful. Individual destinies participate in this uneasiness. It is very easy to see how much you are preoccupied with the generous idea that one of these individual destinies is more closely connected than the others with present circumstances. Allow me, though, to tell you that it is more independent of them than it appears to be. You know it is not by sentiment and affection that the existence of which we are speaking is bound to the existence of what is. Now the veritable bond is formed by affection and sentiment. A fame which is already made is a fairly good refuge from the blows of fate in which the heart is disinterested."³

It was not possible to designate Chateaubriand with more delicacy and at the same time with more firmness. When Ballanche saw that his advice was less followed than he could have wished, a certain bitterness was mingled with his counsel.

"My opinion about *Le Conservateur*," he writes on the 25th of February, "is what it has been from the first number. I have remained, in the literary and political world, the man with old-fashioned sentiments judging and estimating the deeds of the new society. You have always refused to comprehend me, because there is not in me that power of carrying away and of fascination which alone acts on you. I cannot even succeed in making you know your own veritable worth. In spite of all my efforts, you insist in not believing in your-

¹ Unpublished letter of February 18th, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Unpublished letter of February 19th, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. The fragment should be added which is published in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 312 and following. It is dated February 20th.

³ Unpublished letter of the 22nd of February (1819), in M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.

self. You will until the end be an untractable pupil, but you will not succeed in wearying my patience. You have to do with a professor so absolutely persuaded about what he teaches, that he may reasonably hope to arrive at obtaining some conviction from you. With perseverance one can succeed in many things. Faith will transport mountains.”¹

In order to interest his friend, Ballanche had the idea of getting her to collaborate with him on a book about Coppet. He drew up a sketch of it and, when sending it to Mme. Récamier, explained to her what was the leading idea of this work: “Coppet, in this scheme, would be the cradle of the new society. This frontier of German ideas and French ideas, of German sentiments and of French sentiments, would also be the frontier of new ideas, of the old sentiments and of the new sentiments . . . It is there, too, that we shall find the end of the classic reign and the commencement of the romantic reign. The personality of Mme. de Staël will thus have all its historical importance. We should at last have a fairly complete and true picture of the strange times in which we are living. We shall be very much astonished afterwards to have done such fine things. It will be history and poetry, but such an alliance quite belongs to our genius.”²

We already know in what way Ballanche had conceived this description,³ but Léonie, as Mme. Récamier was to be in this story, had her mind too much occupied just at this time to be able to devote herself to the work of composition, and the manuscript remained in abeyance. Ballanche could not find the remedy that he was seeking so passionately. It was in vain, too, that he had recourse to the apologue.

“Yesterday,” he wrote on the 16th of March, “the guardian was not severe; he was wounded like a man who receives a personal insult. The poor girl, gentle and timid as she is, could not find any words with which to disarm him. The guardian did not sympathize with the girl’s trouble, as he did not quite understand the cause of it. He will never understand her. There are things that one can never succeed in

¹ Unpublished letter of February 25th, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. See in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 308, the letter of February 26th.

² Unpublished letter of February 27th.

³ See our Chapter V.

explaining to certain persons. The facts of experience accumulate in the mind, but do not extend the limits of it. The soul remains with the same compass, all its boundaries are immovable. Seas may be as restless as they will in their immense basins, but there is always on the shore a grain of sand which they cannot cross. I know, though, that a great talent may delude us with regard to limits; it may at times paint the wall in the background in such a way as to deceive our eyes, but that tiresome, wretched wall remains standing there. With you I am getting quite Oriental; I am beginning to talk only in metaphors and figuratively.”¹

The days succeeded each other, and the guide began to lose his assurance more and more and to get discouraged. Juliette could not decide to take the vigorous step which her friends advised, and Ballanche was reduced to making of the problem, which time alone was to solve, the subject of his perpetual meditations.² Mathieu de Montmorency saw in this new attitude of Mme. Récamier’s the confirmation of suspicions she had given him, and he once more commenced reproaching her as he had done in the garden of their solitary valley.

“No,” he writes from his house in the forest on the 27th of July, 1819, “nothing is more incompatible with veritable affection than these prolonged silences, in spite of all my entreaties and your promises. Your health is not good, and you are in a troubled state of mind. You even cause my

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

² To the extracts we have just quoted should be added the fragments published in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 121, March 5th, 1819, and p. 309, without any date. All these letters should really be read in order to see what honour they do to the talent and above all to the affection of Ballanche. We will just quote from the unpublished letter of March 21st. “When you are under the wretched and cruel dominion of your nerves, I think you ought to postpone all deliberation with yourself. All your solicitude should then be concentrated on the present moment, and you should abstain as much as possible from extending it over the future. Your mind cannot suffice for so many things. In the midst of the disasters of Troy, beautiful Cassandra raised her eyes, swimming with tears, to heaven. She could only raise her eyes, as her delicate hands were loaded with chains. I always have in my mind that admirable picture of Virgil’s when I see you (four words are here effaced)—you, the best, and most beautiful of women—Why can I not free the wonderful captive from her chains?”

imagination to wander on to suppositions which I repulse. I will, however, trust all the more to your reason, to your promises, to the counsels of your good angel, and above all to Him who is above all the angels, and whom we can never invoke or consult in vain.¹ Will you deign to send, immediately on receipt of this letter, a few words to the Hôtel de Luynes telling me where you are, how you are, and if you have done nothing that will make you perfectly unhappy? Ah, the very suspicion is very cruel; it is unworthy of you to drive me to it. It is very sad only to be kind to the friends who are the least disinterested."²

One winter had sufficed for Chateaubriand to obtain such prestige with Juliette as to be able to separate her from all her past. Adrien de Montmorency wrote less frequently to her, and kept in the background, as delicacy seemed to demand.

"I have a notion," he wrote to Mme. Récamier on the 26th of March, 1819, "that you are very much taken up by your new romantic circumstances, and I do not much appreciate this secondary rôle. I know all the power of your imagination when it is fixed on one single object. You have nothing for the others, except a few trifling favours quite compatible with the sacrifice that is expected from you of older claims, and when so weak a spot is attacked by the most practised and skilful fascination in the world, I ask my own good sense what I can say to you from a distance of more than 400 leagues and after an absence of two years. I am resigning myself to the idea of a friendly thought from you at times, when you are not content with those who are with you."

Chateaubriand took advantage of Adrien's presence in Madrid to send him private requests through Mme. Récamier,³ and Adrien generously interceded with the King of Spain. A more witty way of avenging himself could not be imagined.

¹ Compare an unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency of August 30th, 1819, in which he says, "You are a perfect friend. Do not give up this sweet sentiment for what will upset your whole life."

² Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency. No. 98 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. There are no letters from Adrien in this collection between March 26th, 1819, and September 20th, 1822.

Mathieu de Montmorency, on the contrary, was in the end very much nettled. He wrote to Mme. Récamier at the Abbaye-aux-Bois on the 10th of October (1819), expressing his displeasure :

“ I am sending to inquire about you, as your maid told me you were ill, and as I shall always be interested about your health. You will forgive me for not taking advantage, at any rate to-day, of the permission you kindly gave me to call again to see you. I cannot accustom myself, after a two days’ absence, when I call out of honest and sincere interest twice in the day, to be refused admittance and to have your maid come and make up some story for me, so that you may be more at your ease in your *tête-à-tête* with M. de Ch., whom you wish me *so much* to meet nevertheless. All that is not at all my way of understanding close and devoted friendship, and it is that, I hope, which is more especially wounded as far as I am concerned. Pride may have its share, in spite of myself and to my shame, although I will not own to a motive so little disinterested, but I think it is permissible that my friendship should not care to be duped, nor to worry you with its useless remonstrances. I do not know whether I can hope, whether I even do really hope, that these changeable and fleeting sentiments to which you are ready to sacrifice everything may keep you from regretting what was really very true, very profound, and very lasting. As far as I am concerned myself, I will not dissimulate my sincere regrets and the real pain with which I give up my sweet illusions. Adieu.”¹

As we see, Chateaubriand’s influence over Mme. Récamier was as rapid as it was thorough. In a few months he had subjugated her, torn her away from her old friends. How did he exercise his sorcery over her? He tells us nothing about this, but we can imagine for ourselves. We have scarcely anything in the way of information except that

¹ Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency, No. 103 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. Prince Augustus was also jealous of Chateaubriand. “If I did not love you so passionately should I be so susceptible about your friendship for M. de C . . . ?” Letter No. 83 of the collection quoted.

mysterious phrase in the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*,¹ in which he describes himself waiting for Mme. Récamier under the lime-trees in the garden of the Rue d'Anjou. We can only imagine that he conducted himself with her as with other women, making use of the bold attack in which he had always succeeded so well, strong in his own self-confidence, and in that magic power of expression which his talent put at the service of his desires.

It will have been noticed too, perhaps, that according to the address of letters sent to her in March 1819, Mme. Récamier was still at 31 Rue d'Anjou-Saint-Honoré, and in October of the same year she was living at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Fresh reverses of fortune had obliged her to make this new change of abode,² after another stay at the Vallée-aux-Loups during the summer of 1819.³ She had lost about four thousand pounds in M. Récamier's fresh enterprises, and was obliged to leave the house in the Rue d'Anjou, which she had bought with her private means. She now went to live in the house of a religious community where she had often gone to call on her friend the Baronne de Bourgoing.

For some years Mme. Récamier had foreseen this catastrophe, and had endeavoured to prevent it. In a letter which she wrote to Mme. Delphin, July 16th, 1815, she said : "M. Récamier is very well, and seems to be satisfied. But he is getting a taste for business affairs again, and I should like to see him give all that up. Paul David and Derbel proposed that the house should be taken under the name of Récamier Nephews. M. Récamier would limit himself to the correspondence and be on the council. He would have a third of the profits and two hundred and forty pounds a year besides. An arrangement of this kind seems good to me, as it would ensure us against the unfortunate chances we have already experienced. You would do me a real service by telling me

¹ Vol. IV, p. 464. According to Mme. Mohl (work quoted, p. 64), Mme. Récamier, when talking to a friend thirty years afterwards (?) of this overwhelming sentiment, said, "It would be impossible for a head to be more completely turned than mine was by M. de Chateaubriand. I used to cry all day."

² Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, I, pp. 133-134.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 318 and following.

what you think about it. If you are of my opinion I should feel more inclined to persuade M. Récamier. Besides this, on account of the last disagreeable affairs, I have obtained a promise that M. Récamier should leave me entirely free to regulate the household expenses. This is the first time I have done this, and I am going to regulate the expenses, not according to the profits, but according to our income. As long as M. Récamier is in business, though, I shall be uneasy. His qualities are not suitable for this profession, and his facility and readiness to oblige will always be a source of anxiety to me. I do not know anything worse than to see his reputation and his fortune always depending on the hazard of business affairs."¹ Unfortunately, these prudent combinations did not succeed, and Mme. Récamier was obliged from thenceforth to help her husband with what remained of her own private fortune.

She bore this reverse with sad resignation. Her friends helped her in it. Adrien de Montmorency, hearing from his cousin of Juliette's fresh misfortunes, wrote to her on the 11th of January, 1819, and also to M. Récamier, expressing his affectionate interest.² The Duchess of Devonshire, who was just starting for Italy, wrote to Camille Jordan: "I am afraid that the affairs of your poor friend, Mme. Récamier, are in a bad way. What a pity to see that sweet person so tormented."³ The one gay note in this wretched story is given by Brillat-Savarin.

He was no longer young at this epoch. He was sixty-four years of age, and had gone through the most troubled times without losing anything of his serenity nor of his partiality for good living. He was at work on that *Physiologie du goût* which was only published a few months before his death. He was also composing some short stories.⁴ One of these, which has never been published, is entitled *L'Inconnu*, and dedicated to Mme. Récamier in the following terms :

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Delphin's collection at Lyons.

² Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Prince Augustus of Prussia, with the most perfect delicacy, placed himself at the service of Mme. Récamier. Letter No. 82 of the collection quoted.

³ Fragment of an unpublished letter in M. Boubée's collection at Lyons.

⁴ See L. Tendret, *La fable au pays de Brillat-Savarin*, p. 127.

“ MADAME,

“ Receive and read with indulgence the work of an old man. It is a tribute of a friendship which dates from your childhood, and perhaps the homage of a more tender sentiment. How am I to know, for at my age one can no longer question the heart ?

The author of *L'Inconnu*,

“ B. S.”

The “ dedicatory epistle ” is followed by this “ historical preface ” :

“ You who love novels, you certainly ought to write one,” said the amiable object of my dedicatory epistle to me one day.

“ Dear cousin,” I replied, almost angrily, ‘ you know very well that my duties, my occupations, and my amusements take all my time, and that I have no leisure for becoming an author.’ She did not insist, but she glanced at me with an expression so full of charm that I felt myself penetrated with efficacious grace.

“ That same night I woke up at an unseasonable hour, sighed, lighted my candle, made my plan, and was inspired to write the first four chapters ; the rest went easily enough, and three days afterwards I had obeyed. But whilst working with ardour I had to conciliate my extreme wish to please with my laziness, which has also its charms. I was therefore reduced to writing a short story, which none the less had all the accessories of a much more extensive work and, to speak a language which I ought to have forgotten, I only presented a novel which would pass through a ring. Such is the real origin of the trifle that you are about to read. I place it under the protection of the ladies, and more particularly of those who have a small foot, an elegant figure, a quick imagination and uneven respiration. Such will be interested in my unknown one, will see him as he was, will supply all that is wanting in his story, will try to know the author, who, quite glorious through such success and jealous to prove his gratitude, will bitterly regret having been born forty years too soon.”¹

Brillat-Savarin was one of Mme. Récamier’s habitual

¹ We are indebted for these fragments to Dr. Brillat-Savarin, who has five unpublished stories by the celebrated gastronomist.

guests. When he heard of her change of position he wrote to his relative, Ph. Delphin, of Lyons, on the 8th of October (1819), as follows : "Our uncle and cousin Jacques has just finished the move, not without trouble, worry, and embarrassment. The family is in a most singular position : the husband and the noble fathers are living in the Rue du Vieux Colombier, Paul [David] in a small flat apart, and Mme. Récamier at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Her rooms there are not very comfortable, but she is satisfied with them. Meals will be taken there when the household arrangements are completed, but at present there has been no house-warming and the cook has not commenced her duties."¹

By going to the Abbaye-aux-Bois Mme. Récamier gave up living with her husband. She kept with her Mlle. Amélie Cyvoct, her young niece, whose education she had continued to watch over. During Mme. Récamier's travels in 1818, Mlle. Récamier, as Ballanche called her, had been placed at the Convent of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Her aunt wrote frequently to her, and she kept this correspondence, and later on published some parts of it.² These letters, which are full of practical advice, are very affectionate. Some of them contain reproaches. Mlle. Cyvoct had a tendency to spend too much money, and Mme. Récamier scolds her mildly,³ for it was just at the time when she was obliged to sell the house in the Rue d'Anjou. The following little note, which is not dated, must have been written in the year 1819, as it is addressed to the convent in the Rue des Postes : "There is nothing fresh, my dear child. I am very much worried all the time. Pray for us ; you know what a resource that is. My love to you, my poor little girl."⁴ Mlle. Cyvoct helped her aunt in her new abode at the Abbaye. A letter which she wrote on the 14th of December to Mme. Delphin, of Lyons, gives us some interesting details :⁵

¹ Lyons Library MSS. Coste, No. 1109 of the Desvernay and Molinier catalogue.

² In *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, see pp. 173-174.

³ "The corsets at 24 francs are six francs too much ; I only pay eighteen francs for mine."—Letter No. 18 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

⁴ No. 19 of the collection.

⁵ Additional papers, with the letters from Mme. R. to Mme. Lenormant, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

"MY DEAR AUNT,

"We have, as you know, been at the Abbaye-aux-Bois for about three months, and we should be quite contented here if there were not, in our present circumstances, many grievous things that we cannot forget. My poor Aunt's health is not very good, and this cold weather does not suit her at all. As to Uncle, he is wonderfully well, and as you know his temperament, you will not be surprised to hear that he is very courageous again and very hopeful. Paul David has found a fairly good post. We are sending you, my dear Aunt, the first two volumes of the 'Library for Christian Women,' which are the only two that have appeared yet. The Abbé Lammenoye and one of the friends whom my Aunt knows rather well are the editors of this library. There are to be twenty volumes in all, and they are to consist of extracts from all the Christian authors. It was M. Genoude who kindly brought me the two volumes that Aunt is sending you, and she will let you have the others as they appear. You have perhaps heard, my dear Aunt, of a charitable institution that Mme. de Chateaubriand has just founded. It is a hospital intended for persons who have been ruined by the Revolution, as, on account of their habits and customs when in better circumstances, they would find it very hard to go to an ordinary hospital. There are six patients in it already, and it is called the 'Marie Thérèse Infirmary.' The Abbé Fressinousse consecrated the chapel two months ago, and made a very eloquent speech on that occasion. I must tell you, my dear Aunt, that the Abbé Fressinousse lives at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and that he has even been several times to see Aunt. . . ."

It was from this little cell that Mme. Récamier was from henceforth to exercise what Sainte-Beuve styles her "adorable ambition."

CHAPTER XV

AT THE ABBAYE-AUX-BOIS

(OCTOBER 1819—MAY 1821)

The “cell” in the Abbaye.—Descriptions by Chateaubriand and Sainte-Beuve.—Jean-Jacques Ampère introduced (January 1st, 1820); an intellectual love; the influence of Sénancour.—Ballanche publishes *Le Vieillard et le jeune homme* (1819), *L'Homme sans nom*, and *L'Elégie* (1820); his letters to Mlle. Cyvoct.—Chateaubriand appointed Plenipotentiary Minister to Berlin (November 30th, 1820); his schemes for getting this post; Mme. Récamier’s rôle.—He returns to Paris (April 26th, 1821).—Reading of Lamartine’s *Méditations* at the Abbaye.—Death of Camille Jordan (May 19th, 1821).

THIS was not the first time that a woman, illustrious through her literary relations, had taken refuge in a convent. We cannot, however, compare the case of Mme. Récamier, who was merely a boarder at the Abbaye, with that of Mme. de Longueville, who sought refuge in the little house of Port-Royal des Champs or with the Carmelites of the Faubourg Saint-Jacques. As regards Mme. de Longueville, hers was a veritable conversion, as a result of painful moral trials, a desire to live a life of penitence and to satisfy her former thirst for the romantic by fresh emotions and by the mysterious charms of piety.¹ Juliette Récamier would have continued living at her house in the Rue d’Anjou-Saint-Honoré if it had not been for her reverses of fortune. If her retreat to the convent evokes any souvenir, it is rather that of Mme. du Deffand, who retired to rooms in the Convent of Saint-Joseph, Rue Saint-Dominique, the rooms formerly

¹ See the delightful article by Sainte-Beuve on Mme. de Longueville. *Portraits de femmes*, p. 322 and following. See also a comparison between Mme. Récamier and the Marquise de Sablé, *Causseries du Lundi*, I, p. 122.

occupied by Mme. de Montespan. It was here that Mme. du Deffand used to receive the best society of the times and sometimes Horace Walpole. Here too, though, the resemblance is not complete. At the time Mme. du Deffand shut herself up in the Convent of Saint-Joseph she was sixty-eight years of age and blind. Mme. Récamier, in 1819, was forty-two, and, with the exception of a few nervous troubles, she was in good health. She retired, then, simply on account of the state of her fortune, like Mme. Doublet de Persan, the friend of Piron and of Bachaumont, who in the eighteenth century, after the death of her husband, continued to receive the guests of her famous Saturdays at the Convent of Saint-Thomas.¹

At the Abbaye-aux-Bois, Mme. Récamier was obliged to content herself with a small flat on the third storey, "with brick floors, very inconvenient, a poor staircase, and extraordinary arrangements."² She stayed there six or seven years and, later on, upon the death of the Marquise de Montmirail, she rented a much larger and almost luxurious flat on the first floor.³

The convent which Mme. Récamier had chosen was founded in 1640 by the Annonciades of Bourges. In 1654 the Cistercians of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, from the diocese of Noyon, had acquired this house and obtained from the Pope the translation of the title of their abbey, which was definitely authorized by letters patent in August, 1667.⁴ The convent was

¹ The Convent of the Abbaye-aux-Bois still exists in the same building as at the commencement of the nineteenth century. The chief entrance is 16 Rue de Sèvres, and there is another one, 11 Rue de la Chaise. The convent is superintended by the Canonesses of Saint-Augustin (congregation of Notre-Dame), who also own in Paris the Convent du Roule (Avenue Hoche) and the Convent des Oiseaux (Rue de Sèvres 86). It is used now for (a) outside tenants, whose flats look on to the central courtyard, (b) a boarding-school for girls of good family, about a hundred in number, (c) a free school. The first flat which Mme. Récamier occupied was on the third floor entering by the staircase marked A. Her second flat has eight windows looking on to the courtyard, five on to the street, and two on to the garden. It also has a balcony on the side of the courtyard and the Rue de Sèvres. (N.B.—Since the publication of this book the convents of the Roule, the Oiseaux, and the Abbaye-aux-Bois have been evacuated, and part of the building in the Rue de Sèvres has been sold by auction.—A. H.)

² *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 321 and 322.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

⁴ See in the *Revue Bossuet*, April 15th, 1902, *Sermon de Bossuet à l'Abbaye-aux-Bois*.

evacuated in 1790, and the building served as a prison during the Revolution, but the church was not pulled down.¹ It was to the Abbaye-aux-Bois that Mlle. de Lavalette was taken on the 20th of December, 1815, after her daring collaboration in her father's evasion.² In 1827 some nuns of Notre Dame, the Canonesses of Saint-Augustin, established themselves in the old convent, and opened a house of education there.³

The Duchesse d'Abrantès, in the article she gives in 1822, in the first volume of the *Livre des Cent et un*,⁴ describes the Abbaye-aux-Bois and Mme. Récamier's flat, but her description is pompous and not of great interest. It is almost as bad as that of Monselet, who tells us that Luce de Lancival (who died in 1810) came to the rooms of the charming recluse.⁵ It is Chateaubriand who depicts for us the most faithfully this modest abode, in a celebrated page of his *Mémoires*. "A dark corridor separated two small rooms. I used to maintain that there was an agreeable light in this vestibule. The bedroom was ornamented with a book-case, a harp, a piano, the portrait of Mme. de Stael, and a view of Coppet by moonlight, and there were pots of flowers in the windows. When, quite out of breath with mounting the three flights of stairs, I entered the cell towards evening, I was delighted. The view from the windows was over the garden of the Abbaye, and among the green clumps of trees the nuns could be seen moving about and the schoolgirls playing. The top of an acacia came up as high as one could see. Pointed steeples stood out against the sky, and on the horizon were the heights of Sèvres. The dying sun touched the picture with gold and entered by the open windows. Mme. Récamier was at her piano, the *angelus* was ringing, and the sound of the bell, 'which seemed to be mourning for the day that was dying, *il giorno pianger che si muore*', mingled with the last notes of the invocation to night from *Roméo et Juliette* by Steibelt.

¹ See the *Grande Encyclopédie*, article *Abbaye-aux-Bois*.

² Peuchet, *Mémoires tirés des archives de la police*, IV, p. 347.

³ See the *Légende de la statue miraculeuse de Notre-Dame de Toute-Aide, honorée dans le monastère des religieuses chanoinesses de Saint-Augustin, de la congrégation de Notre-Dame (Abbaye-aux-Bois)*, Paris, 1853 and 1859.

⁴ Ladvocat, p. 345 and following.

⁵ *Portraits après déces*, p. 139.

A few birds came to rest on the raised Venetian blinds of the window. I seemed to go out towards the silence and solitude far away, right over the tumult and noise of a great city.”¹

Sainte-Beuve completes Chateaubriand.

“Mme. Récamier,” he says,² “never held a greater place in society than when she was in that humble abode in one of the extremities of Paris. It was from there that her gentle spirit, set free from the complex life that was too active for her, made itself felt more and more beneficently. We may say that she improved the art of friendship and caused it to make fresh progress. It was, as it were, one more fine art which she introduced into life, and which decorated, ennobled, and arranged everything around her. Party spirit was then in all its violence. She disarmed anger, softened asperities, smoothed over all roughness, and inoculated everyone with indulgence. She would not rest until she had made her friends of opposite sides meet at her house, and had conciliated them under her clement mediation. It is by such influences that society becomes society as much as possible, and that it acquires all its pliancy and all its grace. It is thus that a woman, without going out of her sphere, does a work of civilization of the highest degree, and that Eurydice fulfils, in her own way, the rôle of Orpheus. The latter tamed savage life, the former completes and crowns civilized life.”

As may easily be imagined, the influence of the Abbaye-aux-Bois was not everywhere appreciated in so benevolent a way. A sample of the attacks on Mme. Récamier is to be found in the *Dictionnaire de la conversation et de la lecture*.³

“For anyone who can read,” says the writer of this notice, “there is, in most of the periodical collections published in Paris since that time, a sort of history of the *salon* of Mme. Récamier, and the proof of the all-powerful influence of that politico-literary Areopagus is to be met with in the Academic elections and competitions, in the distribution of ministerial posts or university professorships, and even in the giving of

¹ *M.O.T.*, IV, pp. 472 and 473.

² *Causeries du Lundi*, I, pp. 133 and 134.

³ Second edition, Vol. XV, p. 298, 1870.

administrative posts in all the various grades of the hierarchy. To be protected by Mme. Récamier was, as a matter of fact, during the period of more than thirty years, the most infallible of recommendations, and there was no one, down to the bastard children of her apothecary and of her hall-porter, whom that woman, so essentially kind and obliging, did not find a way of planting in the offices of the Ministers."

It would be premature to discuss these appreciations. We shall see, as we go on, the history of that little *salon* of the Abbaye. We shall see Mme. Récamier at work, and can then tell better whether to believe in the chronicle which speaks badly of her or in the enthusiastic legend. It is quite certain, anyhow, that living at the Abbaye did not make any difference to the habits to which she was accustomed and which she would not have cared to change. Those who used to go to see her in the Rue d'Anjou-Saint-Honoré went just as regularly to the little rooms of the Abbaye, and it was there, on the 1st of January, 1820, that the young Jean-Jacques Ampère was introduced to Juliette. Mme. Lenormant, in the *Souvenirs et Correspondance*,¹ merely tells us that Mme. Récamier had only been about a year at the Abbaye "when the illustrious geometrician, M. Ampère, whom she often saw, asked permission to bring his son." She adds² that Juliette "soon became attached with genuine affection to M. J. J. Ampère." In one of her works, in which she devotes a long study to *Jean-Jacques Ampère et l'Abbaye-aux-Bois*,³ she gives us some details about the first appearance of the young man in the "little attic." With Mme. Récamier that evening, were⁴ Dugas-Montbel, Lemontey, Mathieu de Montmorency, de Genoude, and Ballanche. Later on, some years after this first interview, Jean-Jacques says when writing to Mme. Récamier: "It was on New Year's Day that I saw you for the first time. That moment when I saw you suddenly appear, dressed in white, and with a grace such as until then I had never conceived, will never leave my memory."⁵ "Mme. Récamier's

¹ *Causeries du Lundi*, I, p. 327.

² P. 328.

³ *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 215 and following.

⁴ See p. 222 and following.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 225 and 226. See other details in *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 190.

influence, just like Fauriel's in another sense, was too decisive over Ampère for us to avoid noting the hour and the very instant of it.”¹ “As a matter of fact, from that evening he was crazy. It was an intellectual love.”²

Jean-Jacques was twenty years of age at this time. He was born at Lyons on the 24th of Thermidor of the year VIII (August 12th, 1800). His father was André-Marie Ampère, and his mother's maiden name was Antoinette Carron. He had lost his mother at an early age, and in 1804 had been brought to Paris, where he was educated.³ His father, a man of genius and a very upright man, but without any regularity in his everyday life, only knew how to rouse and stimulate his son's intelligence without guiding it.⁴ The child from his earliest years showed great facilities for learning, but he had a very difficult character to manage. “He takes such advantage of his weakness,” wrote André-Marie Ampère on the 8th of October, 1809, that I do not know what to do.”⁵ He was placed with the Abbé Roche, a former Oratorian who was supposed to be a Jansenist, and who lived in the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève. He then attended the lectures at the Collège Henri IV and at the Collège Bourbon.⁶ Towards 1816, young Jean-Jacques tried “manufacturing chemistry,”⁷ but he could not make up his mind to forget Racine and Virgil. He soon saw that he would never be a “tradesman.” He wanted to be “something,” and he hesitated between letters and science, or rather his dream was to blend the two in himself. He obtained some success, though, as a student. In 1816, when a pupil at the Collège Henri IV, he won at the general competition a fifth accessit for a Latin version.⁸ (Jules Michelet gained the second prize.) In 1817, he obtained the first prize for philosophy with a little dissertation, that was afterwards published, on “The rôle of the principle of

¹ Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 193.

² Cuvillier-Fleur, *Posth. et revenants*, p. 268.

³ Sainte-Beuve, article quoted, p. 187.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 187 and 188.

⁵ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 74.

⁶ Sainte-Beuve, article quoted, p. 188.

⁷ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 131 and following.

⁸ *Annales des Concours généraux*, Paris, Hachette, 1827, p. 63.

causality in the demonstration of the existence of God."¹ His father would have liked to make "a learned apothecary" of him,² but young Ampère held out against this idea, and let himself be carried away by his preference for letters and poetry. It was fairly easy to get his determination accepted by the excellent Ampère, who, in spite of his scientific genius, had within him "curiosity of every kind." In 1818, Jean-Jacques wrote that poem on the "idea of death" which later on he published in his *Heures de poésie*. That composition was neither of very original inspiration nor of a very new form. He then studied himself in order to find out in what way to direct that impatience and that ardour to know about things, which was in him a family characteristic. He wrote as follows to his father:³ "I am unfortunate enough to see many sides to all things and to feel very intensely each one in turn. This makes me turn from the *pro* to the *con* and from the yes to the no somewhat easily. This is a very evil result which springs from a rather good principle." His father was his intimate friend, the confidant of all things. "What a fine winter we are going to spend together," he wrote to him again,⁴ "isolated from everyone by the Rue Saint-Victor, which surrounds us like a stream of mud, and by the icy summits of the Esplanade! What philosophy, physics, reading, and study!"

Sainte-Beuve, who was scarcely four years younger than Jean-Jacques Ampère, knew that generation well, and has criticized it better than anyone else. He had just left college "that memorable year of 1819," when Lamartine was revealed by his first *Méditations*. Victor Hugo, then a youth, was already trying his ability with some pure and touching odes, and André Chénier appeared as a young modern in his works published for the first time together in a collection.⁵ It was the time when the Hugo brothers added to

¹ *Annales des Concours généraux* (philos.), Paris, Hachette, 1828, p. 66 and following.

² Sainte-Beuve, article quoted, p. 188.

³ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 146 and 147, July 22, 1818.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 158, July 5, 1819.

⁵ Article quoted, pp. 189 and 190. According to a passage in the *Journal des Goncourt*, II, p. 81, Sainte-Beuve later on was somewhat severe and contemptuous with regard to J. J. Ampère, "a show academician, and literary directory for lettered bourgeois women."

the *Conservateur politique*, edited by Chateaubriand, the *Conservateur littéraire*. Ampère had quite as much ambition as the most gifted of his college friends. He was meditating a poem on *Attila*, and preparing a tragedy of *Rosemonde*.¹ He was hesitating between "tradition and something new." Like his friends, Sautelet, Frank Carré, Jules Bastide, Albert Stapfer, he had felt the influence of Sénancour and of *Oberman*. This book, so frequently reprinted since its appearance in 1804, this strange composition in which the author, melancholy and ill himself and somewhat ill-treated by life, represents himself as the hero "who does not know what he is, what he likes, what he wants, who groans without cause, who has no object for his desires and who sees nothing except that he is not in his place—in short, who drags along aimlessly in an infinite confusion of worries and vexations." All this romantic and morbid psychology had greatly influenced these young and distinguished minds, fascinated as they were by polite literature and in love with rare emotions. Sainte-Beuve is right in dwelling on the effect which such reading produces on the mind of a young student fresh from college. Nodier was quick to know and comprehend Sénancour; Ballanche appreciated him justly.² Victor Cousin belonged to the small number of those who resisted his influence. Latouche read *Oberman* "with anxiety, as a son of the same family."³ Rabbe, embittered by non-success, "felt it passionately." Sainte-Beuve had had in his hands a correspondence between this group of friends, of which J. J. Ampère was one. "The reading of *Oberman*, when this book happened to fall in their hands, made just the impression on them which can be imagined; that austere and disabused melancholy became for a time the basis of their life: Platonic philosophy was wrong; Jules Bastide was perhaps the one who was the most profoundly penetrated by this tart and stoic food."⁴ Now Jules Bastide had no dearer friend than Jean-Jacques. The letters he wrote, fragments of which are quoted by Sainte-Beuve,⁵ show us how these young men were

¹ *Journal des Goncourt*, p. 190.

² *Portr. cont.*, I, pp. 149 and 178.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 180 and following.

led by the example of *Oberman*. These details are not useless with regard to our subject, as they help us to understand J. J. Ampère's love for Mme. Récamier, a sudden love, that of a young literary man in search of a chimera. As early as January, 1820, J. J. Ampère wrote as follows to Jules Bastide: "Ah, there are moments when it seems to me, as it did to Werther, that God has turned His face from man and given him up to unhappiness without help and without support. I am sad and restless. . . . I did not go out yesterday, and I shall not go out to-day. I am learning English words, particles, rules, and I do not know what besides, all the rubbish into which I dive for the sake of forgetting the sad realities of life. Man is here on earth to be bored and to suffer."¹ On the 20th of May, he writes: "Last week the sentiment of malediction was over me, around me, within me. I owe that to Lord Byron. I had read his *Manfred* twice in English. Never, never in my life has any reading depressed me as that did; I feel ill from it."² Two months later Jean-Jacques was at Lyons. He wrote again to Jules Bastide: "I had succeeded in forgetting—but certain words roused certain ideas, and the sadness all came back. I shall pass my time as best I can with mystic books and German reading, bored to death everywhere. . . . Truly I am ashamed of so easily forgetting my misery and of only feeling bored."³

In these declarations—and if the quotations given do not suffice, the whole correspondence should be read for the sake of conviction—there is much less real emotion than literature and declamation. Cuvillier-Fleury, who is usually somewhat hard on Mme. Récamier, represents the Abbaye-aux-Bois, about 1820, as a tranquil "senate-house of lovers," but he is mistaken in not recognizing at least the agitation and storms which Chateaubriand brought in there. Cuvillier-Fleury tells us that the chief risk which "the lively offspring of the inventor of dynamic electricity" ran with Mme. Récamier was to have the ardour of his talent and his youth cooled for him.

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 159 and 160.

² *Ibid.* See too the letter of June 1st, p. 162.

³ *Ibid.*, I, p. 166. Letter of July 18.

This is a wrong idea and a slander.¹ Mme. Récamier saw from the very first what to think of the sentiments that Jean-Jacques expressed to her or gave her to understand, and she knew what was best to do about them. She appreciated his intelligence and a certain pleasant ingenuousness. Ballanche agreed with her about him.

"He is a young man for whom there is the greatest hope," he wrote to Mme. Récamier on the 16th July, 1820. "Those who at present lay claim to guiding human affairs are very blind in not seeing what there is irresistible, noble, and moral in the ideas of this powerful generation, springing up amongst us, rising from the ruins of our former institutions, and which will just now take possession of all the avenues leading to every kind of illustriousness, to every kind of domination. There is still time for the past to capitulate with the future; to-morrow it will be too late. Be assured that I prophesy because I see. I know very well the camp of the past, and I know the camp of the future very well also. I know the strength of the two armies. There is no doubt as regards the victory. Besides, it is the very history of the human species. Has the past ever been seen to triumph over the future?"²

Mme. Récamier paid attention to these hints, intended perhaps in the mind of the worthy Ballanche to divert her attention from Chateaubriand. She was gentle to the young wooer. Sainte-Beuve knew from "a good source"³ that in the summer or autumn of 1820 she received him at the Vallée-aux-Loups, where Ampère had gone to see his friend Alexis de Jussieu, and that on her return to her little room in the Abbaye she was alone one day when he called to see her, and that he naïvely avowed his love. "Mme. Récamier," he adds, "could do nothing more than to continue to charm him and to calm him gradually without ever curing him." In September, 1821, when established in a country house at Saint-Germain, she received him again, even gave him hospitality there, induced him to work, and interested Chateaubriand in his progress.⁴ She called him Edouard. He composed an

¹ *Posth. et revenants*, pp. 267, 268, 270, and following.

² Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. The post-mark is July 20, 1820. ³ *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, pp. 193 and 194.

⁴ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 194 and 195.

ancient tale in prose, *La Dame de l'Abbaye*, into which he put her under the transparent name of Juliette de Sancerre. All this is innocent enough, and Mme. Récamier was at that time too much taken up with Chateaubriand to give any very serious attention to such nonsense.

Ballanche continued his affectionate attentions. The philosopher had published in 1819, *Le Vieillard et le jeune homme*, which he intended, after the *Essai sur les institutions*, as a "second exposition" of the "social problem," "always with the same ideas,"¹ but under a "more direct and more positive" form. He abandoned slightly his metaphysics and, in the seven conversations which composed his work, endeavoured to make his ideas about society intelligible to the public at large. At the beginning of 1820, he brought out a hundred copies of his *L'Homme sans nom*, a sort of apologue, which he did not wish to give entirely to the public, for fear of compromising the delicacy of his sentiments and the purity of his thought in the midst of political discussions.² The assassination of the Duc de Berry on the 13th of February, 1820, inspired him with the *Elégie*,³ in which he beseeched the "House of France" to identify its destinies with the eternal destinies of France. A serious illness, which he had in 1820,⁴ only exasperated within him that intellectual activity and that sensibility which developed into divination.

Ballanche was keenly interested in the young girl, whom he never called anything else but Amélie Récamier. Certain of the letters which he wrote her when she was at the Convent of the Sacred Heart of Jesus⁵ are Fénelon pure and simple. He gave her advice and initiated her into composition, but above all he told her about his projects of work; and this correspondence furnishes us with more than one detail helpful in understanding his thoughts, which were frequently so hazy.

"I have just made the plan for a book on prisons," he writes on the 26th of August, 1820. "Dominated by the idea that the pain of death will eventually disappear from our barbaric codes, I want a city to be built which shall be called

¹ *Oeuvres* by Ballanche, small edition, Vol. III, p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 157.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 307 and following.

⁴ See Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 37.

⁵ Rue des Postes, Paris.

the *City of Expiations*. This city is destined to receive solely all those who are condemned to death in France. I shall have to find an architect to help me in this work, so that I may have sketches of all the buildings necessary in the *City of Expiations*. The inconvenient part of this book is that it will cost me a great deal of money to bring out. But I cannot avoid going to this expense, as the engravings are necessary for showing up my ideas, and because, too, it is good to show that they are not chimerical. I shall also have to have estimates for it. You know, Mademoiselle, that the Israelites had not only cities of expiation, but cities of refuge. My idea, I fancy, is better than that of colonization. I should have a college of missionaries there, and I should have a college of jailers. I should have a special magistracy. I should have establishments for special instruction, teachers of the Christian doctrine and Sisters of Charity. I should have workshops, in order to give prisoners who could work something to do. They would all have the chance of improving their lot. They would see their chains get lighter as they deserved this. I do not know what else, but perhaps the most execrable of men might some day leave the *City of Expiation* and mix once more with upright people. I would make use of everything that could serve to civilize and polish that portion of society which, perhaps, only requires to be educated up to the social instinct. I should form a college of doctors accustomed to study science in its moral bearing. We must not talk of this idea until it can have the developments that it needs. It would be taken for the dream of a visionary, and we must not discredit it beforehand.”¹

Mlle. Amélie had a very decided taste for political discussions, so that Ballanche communicated to her his opinions. He wrote to her from Lyons :

“I am very well placed here for observing the veritable partisans of the old society. They are numerous and very much convinced. In Paris they are not numerous, and most of them are without conviction. Many of those who write the most eloquent defences in favour of the old society evidently belong to the new society. Here generally they are very

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.



thorough, they are cast in bronze. This nudity of opinions makes one feel where the strength is. Whatever may be the power of the old society, it only seems to have confidence in its despair. Believe me, it is a very sad sight, and even rather alarming.”¹

And Ballanche announced to his young pupil that the “Constitution fever” was about to make an invasion into the Roman States, into Piedmont and Lombardy. He found the most picturesque expressions for painting to her the difference of public spirit in Lyons and in Paris. “It is only in Lyons that the intensity and violence of party spirit is thoroughly known. But as at present there is no outward manifestation, the superficial observer sees nothing. He passes by smoking his pipe in front of barrels which he thinks are empty, and which are full of powder.” He delighted in prophesying, and he soon noticed this himself, as he calls himself “an old crow.”²

The most curious passages of these letters, and those which are the most worth keeping, are the ones in which Ballanche gives Mlle. Amélie his opinions about contemporary and older writers.

“I am not surprised,” he wrote to her, “at your opinion about Mably. I know all the good and all the harm that is said about him. I can only judge him in this way, as I have never read him. But it is good for you to know one thing, and that is that the philosophy of last century, in general, was a philosophy not very moral, and very dry and barren. Mably is one of the men who proves that there was a revolution in ideas long before the revolution in institutions. I think you are slightly mistaken about the opinion you fancy I have on the subject of Mme. de Sévigné. I am not as severe as you think. I have not much taste for that kind of reading, but I think her reputation was well merited. Her letters are veritable memoirs of the times. There is an incontestable facility and there are inventions of style which prove intelligence and imagination.”³

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection, dated July 23rd.

² Unpublished letter of July 31st, 1820, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

³ Unpublished letter of August 10th, 1820, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

Another time it is a question of the second volume of Lamennais :

"People," he writes, "who go in here for that kind of matter were painfully affected by the reading of that volume. The harshness of the *Défenseur* cannot prevent the work being a sorry product of what there is artificial in certain of the opinions of these times. One only exaggerates because one does not really feel. If M. de la Mennais felt as much as I do, for instance, authority and the power of traditions, he would not defend them in this way. In order to concede nothing to the times in which we live he refuses to admit what belongs to all times. The gentlemen of the *Défenseur* would not fail to say, as they said in the *Quotidienne*, that I have not understood the book. I can assure you that I have thoroughly understood it, and that M. de la Mennais did not know where he was going."¹

If Ballanche wrote in this way to Mlle. Cyvoct, it was no doubt that he found in her an intelligence very prompt in grasping everything, but it was also because Mme. Récamier, without breaking off with him, was very much taken up elsewhere at that time. Mme. Lenormant has not attempted to deceive us on this score. "From the moment that M. de Chateaubriand was introduced into Mme. Récamier's society, the appearance of this *king of intelligence*, as M. Ballanche qualified him in the uneasiness of his friendship, had for result to give him on this private stage the preponderant place which his genius ensured for him everywhere. . . . It is certain that Mme. Récamier's enthusiastic friendship for M. de Chateaubriand often caused M. Ballanche great disturbance of mind. The fresh interest which was influencing her was bound to make her take a more active part than formerly in the march of events."²

We have not all the elements necessary for writing the

¹ Unpublished letter of September 6th, 1820, in M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS. In a letter of October 28th he says: "The bookshops do well, believe me, to hurry on the editions of the *Cours de littérature* by Laharpe, for in a few years' time that would be a very bad speculation." There is a great deal that might be taken from the letters to Mlle. Amélie, which in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection are with those to Mme. Récamier. The political observations contained in them are of the greatest interest.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 336, 337, 338.

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history of the intercourse of Chateaubriand with Mme. Récamier during the years 1819, 1820, and 1821. Chateaubriand's letters to Juliette do not figure in the collection she left to her heirs,¹ or at least they no longer figure amongst them. We have only the fragments published by Mme. Lenormant. The book of *Mémoires* which Chateaubriand wrote in 1839 on Mme. Récamier refers only to facts previous to her removal to the little flat in the Abbaye, and the general account which Chateaubriand gives elsewhere of her life during these years is intentionally very much abridged and extremely circumspect. From 1818 Chateaubriand continued his polemics in the *Conservateur*. On the 5th of December, 1818, he published his famous article, to which he attached such great importance: "On the ethics of interests and of duty."² On the 3rd of December, 1819, he made a long speech on foreign policy at the Chamber of Peers.³ On the 18th of February, 1820, the *Conservateur* paid its "tribute of regrets to the memory of the Duc de Berry."⁴ The Decazes Ministry fell. The *Moniteur* of February 21st appointed the Duc de Richelieu President of the Council. The sister of the Duc de Richelieu, Mme. de Montcalm, was very friendly with Chateaubriand. She came to see him, and told him that there was "no ministry vacant"⁵ for him, but that if he would consent to go away, he would be sent to Berlin. "I had become," writes Chateaubriand, "the master of political France by my own forces."⁶ Accustomed to living either hidden in my own recesses, or momentarily in the vast life of the centuries, I had no taste for the mysteries of the ante-chamber.⁷ I went away from France, leaving my friends in possession of an authority which I had bought for them at the price of my absence. I was a little Lycurgus."⁸

The *Moniteur* of the 30th of November, 1820, published the announcement of the appointment of Chateaubriand to the post of special envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary at

¹ See our description of M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.

² *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 155 and following.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 164.—Mme. Lenormant, *Souv. et Corr.* I, pp. 339 and 340, copies from Chateaubriand, *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 169.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

the Court of Berlin, and the new Ambassador left Paris on the 1st of January, 1821.¹ But the affair had not been as simple as Chateaubriand would have us believe. It had not come off without long and difficult scheming. The letters published in the *Mémoires*² do not tell us all. Chateaubriand had a great desire for a high place, and not only was this not offered to him as rapidly as he tells us, but in order to obtain it certain steps had to be taken over and over again, and the all-powerful intervention of Mathieu de Montmorency was specially necessary. It was in this way that Mme. Récamier was called upon to intervene. She persuaded Mathieu to act, and the letters addressed to her show us the difficulty she had in seconding her exacting friend.

Ballanche was very much disturbed on Mme. Récamier's account about the agitation which political events caused Chateaubriand.

"I can quite understand M. de Chateaubriand's agitation," he wrote her.³ "I feel that this agitation must act on you very much more keenly than it does on him. He is preserved from intensity of emotion by his great versatility of disposition. If he could take things more simply, if he could be more himself, if he could conceive that the value of men depends on things and circumstances, if he could accustom himself to only seeing the real truth and not the truth made or invented, he would have made a great step towards tranquillity. But he is as nature has made him, and there is nothing to be said. As for me, I should like him to stay in Paris. I should prefer this for your sake, since you have given him a considerable share of your affection. I wish it for his sake, because he will never be at ease in any other place than Paris; also because he has given up his own opinions and his own ideas, and these opinions and ideas will triumph in Europe in spite of him. . . . He could at present retire from the political stage. He has a sure refuge in his fine talent, and that is a shelter which will remain inviolable."

¹ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 180.

² Vol. IV, p. 172 and following.

³ Unpublished letter of July 30th, 1820, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

He returned to this subject in very picturesque terms in his letter of August 5th:¹

" Is there nothing decided yet about the fate of the friend who takes up most of your time ? You do not tell me anything about it. But I cannot repeat enough that he ought not to regret in any way the Ambassadorship, in case it is not given to him. If it should be given to him he must only keep it as short a time as possible. Let him retire from the fray. I should like to say to him what he said to me on the occasion of *Le Vieillard et le jeune homme*, but I should say it to him taking into account the situations and the distances. Politics are a fateful game at such moments. Do you remember that game in which you are asked ' if the little man still lives ' ? When after passing the lighted match from hand to hand it threatens to go out, everyone hastens to pass on to his neighbour the burden of this ephemeral destiny, and everyone is right. I do not know how it is that there are still people to be found who dare to take upon themselves the responsibility of giving advice. A piece of advice may ruin everything, and I do not know whether there is any advice that can save things. As you know, I do not fear anything for the country. But France has lost the management of the destinies of Europe : that great ministration has passed over to Spain. This is an accomplished matter. Our national pride will suffer through it ; it is perhaps a moral thing, this fresh checkmate. Let us resign ourselves, for it is a judgment of Providence being accomplished."

What Ballanche did not forgive Chateaubriand was the temper that the author of *La monarchie selon la Charte* put into his politics. According to Ballanche, Chateaubriand did himself a great deal of harm by the postscript which he added to this work. He had gone off his own line, and ever since this manifestation had been in a sort of false position all the time, as the chief of a party which was not his own and which could disown him in a moment of triumph. Ballanche had a very energetic royalistic feeling, but at the same time he had a very keen sentiment of what was and what must be. When he was living at Lyons he talked of this with Bredin

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

whom he called a “Job” and a “Socrates.” He was preparing, too, to build up his *City of Expiations*, in which these ideas would be developed.¹ The elegiac turn of his mind led him to find life deplorable and to fancy that all the difficulties of his epoch were weighing on him. All his reflections were accompanied with suffering. He was distressed for Chateaubriand just as he was distressed on his own account, and he would have liked a man of such genius to take refuge in his fame in order to make for himself an independent existence.²

Chateaubriand did not see things in this way. Every morning he sent a note to Mme. Récamier; every day at three o’clock he paid her a visit. “Unsociable by nature and exclusive,” says Mme. Lenormant,³ “he would only admit *at his hour* a very limited number of persons, so that it was after dinner that Mme. Récamier received.” In these notes and in these interviews, if there was often a question of love, one can imagine, when one knows Chateaubriand, that there was also a question of politics. He had at that time a considerable position. It was the moment when Victor Hugo addressed to him the ode on “Genius” :

Quand ton nom doit survivre aux âges,
Que t’importe, avec ses outrages,
A toi, géant, un peuple nain ?⁴

Literary success and even love could not satisfy him. It was necessary to him, from time to time, to taste the satisfactions of power.

Mathieu de Montmorency did not at first help with regard to the steps that Chateaubriand was taking, or getting others to take, in order to obtain his Ambassadorship. On the 10th of July he jokes on this subject.

“It seems to me,” he says in his letter to Mme. Récamier,

¹ According to the unpublished letter of September 24th, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

² “Persuade him that there is only France for him, that France alone can enjoy him. The return of the Bourbons has caused many of the positions to be false, but there is no false position when one is established in fame as he is.”—Unpublished letter to Mme. Récamier, October 23rd, 1820, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

³ *Souv. et Corr.* I, p. 324.

⁴ *Odes*, Book IV, *Ode 6*. See too the *Chateaubriantiana*, by Cousin d’Avalon, published in 1820. 2 vols. Plancher. Bibliothèque nationale, Ln. 27, 4072.

"that there is another negotiation which does not proceed any more quickly than this one. Forgive me my bad jokes, believe in my constant regrets, and give me some scraps of news about your friends of the four o'clock rendezvous. . . . He¹ certainly asked some private questions about these same four o'clock customs of which I have just spoken. I hope you will not betray the confidence with which I have answered in the same way."²

But Mathieu's rancour could not hold out against a serious wish of Juliette's, and in November it was he who, by going to see Pasquier and Richelieu, prepared Chateaubriand's reconciliation with the King.

"Both of them," he wrote to Mme. Récamier, "said that there would be no difficulty about the post of Minister of State; that it would be given up; that they could not argue about the precise moment, but that it was necessary to take into consideration a certain repugnance in high places about undoing exactly what had been done. But all seems to indicate that the proceedings will be graceful enough to allow the rest to be arranged and simplified. Both of them feel the necessity of not losing a moment and of coming to a conclusion in another couple of days. You will be glad, I fancy, to have these details. Burn them, I beg you, and tell Chateaubriand that I consider myself fortunate in having rendered the King and him a veritable service by placing them again on proper terms with each other. . . . "³

Chateaubriand, in spite of his having "little taste for the mysteries of the antechamber,"⁴ needed the help then of Mathieu de Montmorency, at the time when he was pushing forward Villèle and Corbière.

A last letter from Mathieu to Mme. Récamier will show us the workings of the intrigue. In his letter of December 20th to the "noble Vicomte,"⁵ Mathieu overwhelms him with compliments and polite speeches. But let us read

¹ Adrien de Montmorency.

² Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency, No. 105 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

³ Text like the original. No. 107 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. See *Souv. et Corr.* I, pp. 340 and 344, but the letter quoted on p. 344 is of Tuesday, November 21st, and not the 10th.

⁴ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 177.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

what he writes from Mans to Mme. Récamier on the 13th of November : "I received your letter, sweet friend, yesterday evening, in the midst of the agitations of the commencement of the elections. These took up the whole of my day ; but the beginning is fairly good, and would confirm what you are rather in a hurry to say, but what you say in a way that is very agreeable as far as I am concerned, about the *tête basse* of a certain party which fortunately is not yours. It would be too frightful with intimate friends, and unfortunately *one more* than I should like in the different shades of extremes. . . . I am snatching a few moments in order to send you the letter which you want. I was tempted to send it direct, and I would advise you to forward it as soon as possible through your cousin, because I have put a few words in about my elections which might be useful, and which would lose their seasonableness if delayed too long."¹

It was to Mme. Récamier, then, that Chateaubriand owed the help of Mathieu de Montmorency in this affair, and this help, whatever may have been the power of the candidate, was not valueless for the obtaining of the Ambassadorship.²

¹ Unpublished letter from M. de Montmorency, No. 109 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² A curious unpublished letter from Prince Augustus shows us what Chateaubriand's pretensions were :

"BERLIN, October 27th, 1820.

"You judge my sentiments aright, Madame, in believing that my admiration for noble characters and great talent would make me desire that M. de Chateaubriand should come to settle in Prussia. But I do not think that he could obtain the post of Governor of Neufchâtel, because it is not vacant, and they do not seem inclined to give it to a foreigner. My Lord Marshall owed it to the personal friendship of the great Frederick. The only place which might suit M. de Chateaubriand would be that of Academician, in case a sufficient pension were granted him. Voltaire, Maupertuis, and other literary men occupied the post for a long time under the great Frederick. After the immense efforts Prussia has made to reconquer her political independence, the most severe economy is necessary for the re-establishment of our finances, and this would prevent an extraordinary pension being granted to M. de Chateaubriand. On account of this there would be little hope of obtaining it under present circumstances unless the King, or Prince Hardenberg, would be willing to make a special exception for him. In case that a post would suit M. de Chateaubriand it would be necessary for him to express a wish to obtain it and indicate the conditions on which he would accept it. I would then undertake to get the necessary information so that M. de Chateaubriand would not be exposed to a direct refusal, but I have not much hope of succeeding."

AUGUSTUS."

No. 86 of the letters from Prince Augustus in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

Chateaubriand's letters to Mme. Récamier, too, during this crisis and until his appointment,¹ confirm the impression which Ballanche and Mathieu de Montmorency give us of the agitation of the "noble Vicomte."²

When Chateaubriand was sure of leaving for Berlin, Ballanche was as sorry for his friend's sake as for the sake of the Ambassador himself. His reflections about this journey were very judicious :

"The sovereigns at Troppau," he writes,³ "will make some kind of a manifestation. They will decide that such or such a system shall be followed for the interior government of the different States of Europe. Now in Europe there are two quite distinct divisions—there is civilized Europe and uncivilized Europe. When speaking of civilization it must be understood that I mean the present civilization, without pretending to judge it. Thus, to speak more exactly, I will say that there are two ages of civilization in Europe. Well, the sovereigns will want to impose on us the institutions which belong to one age of civilization, and the nations will only want to admit the institutions analogous to the present age. In this way the sovereigns will find themselves outside the civilization of the States they have to govern. In this way then, to speak roughly, the sovereigns will have for natural allies foreigners instead of having for natural allies their own people. I leave you to judge what may happen with such a state of things. This is the reason of my perplexities with regard to the person about whom you tell me. And my perplexities come from the interest I feel for him, for his own sake and for yours."

One cannot help comparing the ceaseless anxiety of Chateaubriand and his perpetual concern about himself with the elevated views of Ballanche, his attachment to principles, and his independence. The latter thought more about the glory or happiness of others than about his own glory and his own happiness, and it was, for instance, "with infinite pleasure that he saw Mme. de Staél's fame perpetuated both by a fine

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, pp. 341–344 and 346.

² *Ibid.*

³ Unpublished letter of November 29th, 1820, to Mme. Récamier at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.

picture and a great opera."¹ This broad-mindedness was all the more honourable to him, because, in the city of Lyons, where he was then staying, social uneasiness was perhaps more thorough and more deeply felt than anywhere else. In spite of melancholy men, he manifested his faith in the future of the new society. *Le Vieillard et le jeune homme* had caused great scandal among his friends. An article in the *Défenseur* had attacked it violently. *L'Homme sans nom* had even been parodied, but neither criticisms nor insults disturbed this thinker in his cordial devotion to what he believed to be the general interest of humanity. "I can see that politics depress you," he wrote to Mme. Récamier, "and more particularly because you fear that your friends may become the instruments of a retrograde tyranny which they are not the ones to serve. Alas ! people do not sufficiently realize that when once principles are laid down all the consequences have to be endured, no matter how odious and absurd. People do not realize either that men are guided by their situations much more than by their most secret opinions even. Before laying down a principle, then, we must foresee the consequences of it, and before starting along a road we must begin by getting high enough to see its situation, so that we may go along freely in our opinions.

"If writing could be of any use, I should certainly have a great deal to write, but I am too convinced of the uselessness of it, particularly as far as I am concerned. I am too unknown and too little a party man. Another obstacle is that I believe I have arrived at that height where the two opinions meet, like the right rein and the left rein in the hand of the driver, and I am not the driver."²

Chateaubriand wrote to Mme. Récamier that he was accepting the Ambassadorship "according to her orders."³ He had assured her that he should only be absent a few months, and Mathieu de Montmorency had confirmed the sincerity of that promise.⁴ It will be noticed that in the book of his

¹ Unpublished letter to Mme. Récamier, November 29th, 1820, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Unpublished letter, without any date except Sunday morning. Addressed to Mme. Récamier at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 346.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Mémoires in which he tells about the Embassy at Berlin—a book written in 1839¹ and almost under Juliette's eyes—Chateaubriand does not quote one of his letters to the friend who was so distressed at his departure.² He did not return to Paris until April 26th, 1821, to receive his State ministry. He tells us somewhat fully the details of his life during the four months of his absence, but he does not mention Mme. Récamier, except once or twice in an episodic way.³ Mme. Lenormant quotes a few of those mysterious letters. From one of them we learn that Mme. Récamier, when replying, had recourse to a proceeding for rendering certain lines of her writing invisible.⁴ There is no doubt that this correspondence, if we possessed the original letters, would show us how much disturbed Mme. Récamier still was at this time by her passion for Chateaubriand.⁵

In a letter written by the Duchesse de Duras to Chateaubriand, March 1st, 1821, she lets him understand that she knows about his intercourse with the Abbaye-aux-Bois. "My poor brother," she adds, "that is very young for an old diplomatist—Get it into your mind that you have only me for a friend, me alone. . . . But you are like the fowl; you throw away the pearl and prefer the millet seed."⁶ On the 16th of March she writes again: "Dear brother, let us talk about you—that is, about the Abbaye! [aux-Bois]. People say you are coming back in the spring solely for this *beauty*, and that the lady is pining in the meantime. It was one of her best friends, now that you are away, who told me this yesterday. You are fated, then, not to be able to live without chains? How many of them I could count! But to return to the *beauty*, it is said that your leave of absence is for the sake of her sweet eyes. That rather impairs your diplomatic gravity. Anyhow, get it and come back: I shall see you then a few times at any rate."⁷ Chateaubriand replied to this on the 31st of March. "How can you believe all the nonsense about the Abbaye-aux-Bois?

¹ See Biré's note, I, IV, p. 179.

² See *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 346. "Be tranquil," he wrote to her.

³ Vol. IV, pp. 184-195. ⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 352. ⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Bardoux, *La Duchesse de Duras*, p. 238.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 250. Compare 262.

If I get leave of absence you will see that I shall return here with Mme. de Chateaubriand for many long years. What I should prefer would be to bury myself with her in some nook, so that I should be no more talked about. I have had enough of it.”¹ These declarations were not very sincere, and the duchess showed very clearly that she was not taken in by them when she wrote to Chateaubriand just as he was about to start back : “ You have a thousand good qualities,” she said to him, “ but you are a man, and consequently affectation and little mannerisms must win the day with you over the sincere, simple, and strong attachment of my heart.”²

With Mme. Récamier there was no “ affectation ” and there were no “ little mannerisms.” She loved Chateaubriand deeply and passionately, as we shall see later on by the grief his infidelities caused her. She remained in Paris attending to his interests. He had scarcely reached Mainz when he wrote to her on the 6th of January : “ Do not forget to worry our friends for the return.”³ She had given him a letter for M. d’Alopeus, Russian Ambassador in Berlin, whom she had known in 1818, at Aix-la-Chapelle,⁴—an agreeable man, but who “ had the pleasant mania of fancying himself adored.”⁵ As early as January he begged her to get a leave of absence for him,⁶ and in the letters which followed he kept referring to this all the time.⁷ Then, too, we have not all these letters. On the 10th of February Chateaubriand reckons that he has written ten letters from Berlin, and Mme. Lenormant only gives us five of them. He was not sent to Laybach, his State ministry was not forwarded to him, and he talked of nothing else now but resigning,⁸ and sent Mme. Récamier letters for Mathieu. His self-esteem was exasperated to such a point that he knew no moderation in the opinions he emitted about his situation and about himself. “ I have no need of anyone,” he wrote, “ but they have need of me.”⁹ “ I am like Don

¹ Bardoux, *La Duchesse de Duras*, p. 258.

² *Ibid.*, p. 270.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 348. Compare the letter of January 13th, *ibid.*, p. 349.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I, p. 350 and note 1.

⁵ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 188.

⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 352.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 353, 357, 359, 361, and following.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 355.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 361.

Quixote," he continued, "the man of justice."¹ He reproached Mme. Récamier for her sympathy with the Liberals, whom he accused of having "ruined the cause of Liberty"² and of dreaming stupidly of the independence of Italy. He considered Constant sanctimonious, and the Marquis de Catellan mad.³ In short, in all these letters from the Ambassador, in all that we have seen at any rate, there is scarcely anything on another subject than the Ambassador himself, his hopes, his rancours, and his anger.

The excellent Mathieu continued to work actively in the interests of M. de Chateaubriand. "The day before yesterday," he writes on March 3rd, 1821, "I spoke to two Ministers, who praised very highly the last dispatches, and promised the thing at once which ought already to be an accomplished fact."⁴ And in a rather pretty little note, dated only: "Monday, midnight," but which seems to belong to this time, he writes to Mme. Récamier:

"I only came in five minutes before midnight. I suppose the fatal hour has now struck at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and I am distressed. Do not imagine that my chief regret is not to be able to speak to you about the affair of a friend who is a trifle *fabulous*, although it was for his sake only that you sent for me. I talked a little and asked various questions about what concerns him. I do not know anything fresh for certain, but I fancy that they would like to wait a little to make it up with him, and at bottom I should like this. I will come and talk to you about it on my return from Saint-Cloud, as I am obliged to go back there to-morrow morning. I will call at my ante-Cinderella hour if I am not too late, and if I am it will be Wednesday morning. The two Minister friends seemed to me to be somewhat uncertain for at least two or three days."⁵

Chateaubriand was not inclined to recognize the good services that Mathieu had rendered him. Just before leaving Berlin he wrote to Mme. Récamier: "Will Mathieu be very

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, p. 360.

² *Ibid.*, p. 368. Compare p. 369.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

⁴ Fragment of an unpublished letter, No. 112 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

⁵ Unpublished letter, No. 114 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

pleased to see me? I doubt it.”¹ “Mindful of the welfare of France,”² if we are to believe his own words, Chateaubriand seemed to have no warmth except in the interest of his own pride. On the 30th of July, 1821, he wrote to Baron Pasquier to renew his offer of resignation.³ He did it with a proud humility and the scarcely disguised sentiment of his own great importance. We are not called upon to judge Chateaubriand as a politician, as that would be a study outside the limits of our investigations. Sainte-Beuve did it, nevertheless, in the course of an article which he wrote in 1859 on Mme. Récamier.⁴ He depicts him as “never content, always ready to give up what he has undertaken, being from the second day up to his neck in it, and a hundred feet over that, wanting everything and not caring for anything, not having enough pity and disdain for his *poor friends*, his *poor wretched friends* (as he calls them), believing that all the sacrifices are on his side, and complaining of the ingratitude of others as though he alone had done everything.” What we may venture to say, at any rate, is that Mme. Récamier must have had a great deal of patience, and no doubt of passion too, to have borne as she did these caprices, these sudden exactions, this bad temper, and the bursts of vanity, which his genius, perhaps, accounted for without making them any the more agreeable.

Present or absent, Chateaubriand had been, ever since the year 1818, the object of Mme. Récamier’s constant preoccupations. Other friends, and the worthy Ballanche even in a slight measure, had been relegated to a secondary importance. In 1819, Lamartine’s first *Méditations* had been read and admired at the Abbaye before they were published.⁵ It was not that Lamartine at that time knew Mme. Récamier, for he says himself in his *Cours familier de littérature*⁶ that he only had “the good fortune of seeing her” in 1832. If we are to believe the tradition which holds good in the family of Mme. Récamier,⁷ it was M. de Genoude, at that time young and

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 371.

² *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 228.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁴ *Causeries du Lundi*, XIV, p. 316 and following.

⁵ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 328.

⁶ Vol. IX, p. 12.

⁷ And which was transmitted to us by M. Delphin, of Lyons,

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celebrated for his translations of *Isaiah* and the book of *Job*, who, by way of paying court to Mlle. Cyvoct, brought, and read at the Abbaye, the proofs of this work.

Benjamin Constant had forsaken Mme. Récamier. In the collection of his letters to Juliette there are none between the year 1816 and March, 1822. He was entirely given up to politics, to the publishing of his pamphlets, and to his contributions to the *Mercure du XIX^e siècle*. In 1819 he was appointed deputy.¹ Camille Jordan was ending, in the ranks of the Opposition, an existence which had been entirely devoted to the defence of liberty. He died on the 19th of May, 1821, a victim to the fatigue of his latest struggles.² On Monday, May 21st, Michelet notes in his *Journal*: “Funeral of Camille Jordan. France is the poorer. Poret, more fortunate than I am, was able to be there. Benjamin Constant’s little speech has penetrated me. Those are the words and sentiments of a heart and soul which are thoroughly French.”³ Mme. Récamier lost in him the dearest witness of her early days, a tender and humbly devoted friend, whom she regretted no doubt more than once, later on, in her hours of sorrow.

¹ See *Benjamin Constant à Saumur en 1820*, in the *Nouvelle Revue rétrospective* of January 10th, 1901.

² E. Herriot, *Camille Jordan et la Restauration*, third article, *Revue hist. Lyons*, 1902, No. 4. ³ J. Michelet, *Mon Journal*, pp. 201-202.

CHAPTER XVI

POLITICAL INFLUENCE

MAY 1821—NOVEMBER 1823

Mathieu de Montmorency is appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs (December 15th, 1821).—Chateaubriand Ambassador to England (January 9th, 1822); an “exacting royalist”; he leaves London for the Verona Congress (September 1822).—Jean-Jacques Ampère’s passion.—Mme. Récamier’s intervention in the Coudert affair; she helps the children of the Duc de Berry.—Mathieu de Montmorency and Chateaubriand at the Verona Congress; their letters.—Mathieu de Montmorency resigns office (December 25th).—Chateaubriand appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs.—P. L. Courier’s criticism.—Letters from Adrien de Montmorency.—Mme. Récamier’s intervention in favour of Benjamin Constant, of Mme. Joseph Bonaparte, of General Lamarque, and the conspirator Roger.—Her intercourse with Auguste Barbier, Lamartine, Prosper Mérimée.—Difficulties with Chateaubriand.—She leaves for Italy (November 2nd, 1823).

AFTER the baptism of the Duc de Bordeaux,¹ Chateaubriand was “at last” reintegrated in his State ministry. When Villèle retired in July, 1821, he decided to place his resignation as Minister Plenipotentiary at the Court of Berlin in the hands of Baron Pasquier. He has published in his *Mémoires*² the letter which he wrote to Pasquier. This letter is dated July 30th. In the extracts from Villèle’s note-book the resignation is already announced on the 14th of July.³ Chateaubriand forthwith gave to Monsieur the note which he quotes.⁴ He indicates in it to the King the conditions on

¹ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 223.

² IV, p. 225. Compare *Mémoires du Chancelier Pasquier*, V (Paris, Plon, 1894), p. 271.

³ *Mem. et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, II (Paris, Didier, 1888), p. 444.

⁴ *M.O.T.*, IV, pp. 228 and 229.

which "he and his friends" would be prepared to support the Government. The *Moniteur* of December 15th, 1821, announced the formation of the Cabinet of the Right. Villèle was taking the Finances and Mathieu de Montmorency the Foreign Affairs. "I had had too great a share," writes Chateaubriand,¹ "in the late political movements, and I exercised too great an influence, for them to be able to take no notice of me." The *Moniteur* certainly did announce, on the 10th of January, 1822, that by a decree of the previous evening the King had appointed Chateaubriand "State Minister" to the Embassy of London. The new Ambassador had hoped for something better. At the beginning of December a combination had been proposed by which he would have had the Ministry of the Exterior and Mathieu de Montmorency the King's Household.² Louis XVIII had held out for some time with regard to the choice of M. de Montmorency. "He asked us," says Villèle,³ "whether we did not know that Montmorency was a man belonging to a coterie, and whether we did not fear that, together with his party, he might cause us grave difficulties. We replied that we knew of this drawback, but we knew also that he was not free from ambition nor indifferent to royal favour, and this would make him considerate always to the King and the Ministry."

The appointment of Chateaubriand to London gave rise to no difficulty⁴ at the Ministerial Council. On the other hand, Mathieu de Montmorency nearly brought about a rupture by insisting that the Duc de Laval, who had been recalled from Spain, should be appointed to the Embassy of Naples. The King had chosen de Serre for this post.⁵ "Very much affected already at having lost the post of Knight of Honour to Madame, which this Princess had declared incompatible with ministerial functions, he talked of resigning office."⁶ Chateaubriand had scarcely been appointed before he made himself the representative of the "exacting royalists," as Villèle styles them. The Ministry refused to follow his

¹ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 230.

² *Mém. et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, II, p. 477.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 496 and 497.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, III, p. 1.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

advice. The way in which Chateaubriand's attitude was judged by the men of his own party should be studied in the various memoirs of the times. "To the more prejudiced," writes Villèle,¹ "we shall say that what has been asked for, for all, we have granted unreservedly to the one who took upon himself to make these claims, namely, M. de Chateaubriand. We obtained later on from the King, in spite of his repugnance, that he would let us have him for a colleague, and he finished by obliging the King to order us, after the rejection of the income law, to signify to him his reinvestment at once, so that, as he said, he might no longer see in his Cabinet *the man who had betrayed us*. These were the terms that he then used." On the 4th of January, 1822, Chateaubriand wrote to Villèle that he would "gratefully" accept the London Ambassadorship.² After having intervened in favour of La Bourdonnaye, who wanted to know on what terms the Ministry would buy his help (the expression is not exaggerated),³ Chateaubriand went to his post.

He has himself told about his Ambassadorship in London in a book of his *Mémoires*.⁴ He gives us some of his official dispatches to M. de Montmorency; he notes his impressions on his transition from the secret and silent monarchy of Berlin to the public and noisy monarchy of London.⁵ This book is one of the most interesting in the *Mémoires*. It abounds in animated details about the ways and customs of London, about the English politics of that epoch. Chateaubriand's great preoccupation, in the midst of all these affairs, was the Congress, that Congress which was to be the sequel to those of Laybach and of Troppau, and which it was proposed to convene at Verona. Chateaubriand, very much interested in Spanish affairs, and very anxious above all to play an important personal part, wanted to be sent as French representative to the Congress. As early as May 24th he wrote about this to Mathieu de Montmorency, but he only received "a confused and evasive" reply.⁶ In a letter to Villèle, dated May 17th, he declared plainly: "It is the thing I desire most earnestly

¹ *Mem. et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III., p. 6.

² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 19 and following.

⁴ Book IX of the third part.

⁵ *M.O.T.*, IV., p. 244.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

and that I ask you for; it is there that I shall succeed in acquiring, in your interests, that diplomatic preponderance which increases for me day by day."¹ He deputed the Duchesse de Duras to "press the Minister of Finance."² He feared the candidature of Adrien de Montmorency, and endeavoured to weaken it. "I certainly have nothing against that poor Duc de Laval," he said to Villèle;³ "he is a loyal knight, but it seems difficult to me to place him amongst such men as Metternich, d'Hardenberg, Pozzo, Capo d'Istria." Mathieu de Montmorency did not appear to want Chateaubriand at the Congress,⁴ but the King still had a certain animosity against Mathieu and some distrust. M. de Montmorency proposed to put an end to Spanish affairs by sending secretly to the Spanish royalists arms, munitions, and money.⁵ This project was rejected as not being very loyal. On the 26th of August, the Council of Ministers decided nevertheless to present "to the King, M. de Montmorency, who should be sent to Vienna to the sovereigns, in order to settle in concert with them the preliminaries of the Congress. MM. de Chateaubriand, de la Ferronnays, and de Caraman were designated for being present at Verona at the conclusion of the affairs and the drawing up of those acts which would be prepared at Vienna."⁶ The King sanctioned the choice made by his Council.⁷ At the same time, in order to counterbalance the influence which this decision would confer on M. de Montmorency, he decided on a President for the Council of Ministers, and chose Villèle for this function. (Decree of September 4th.)

Chateaubriand had gained his point. He had brought de Villèle to "force M. de Montmorency's hand."⁸ He set out from Dover on the 8th of September, 1822,⁹ on his way to Verona. At least he ought to have been satisfied and thankful. "Well," he wrote in his *Mémoires*,¹⁰ "my real

¹ *Mém. et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III, p. 27.

² *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 269.

³ *Mém. et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III, p. 28.

⁴ See his letter dated August 17th, *M.O.T.*, IV, pp. 275 and 276.

⁵ *Mém. et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III, p. 33.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁸ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 283.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

inclination was not for what I had obtained." We find him again there just as we saw him at the time of his mission to Berlin. Sainte-Beuve¹ summed up very wittily this attitude of Chateaubriand's: "He was at the same time *indispensable* and *impossible*. *Nec tecum possum vivere, nec sine te*; just as with a mistress full of caprices. At the least discord, when the least thing went wrong, he found 'all this up to his head and a hundred feet over.' He wanted to get away from it all. to return, but the question was, Whither? Not to the Canadian forests, like the young man in the *Essai*, but a hundred or thousand leagues outside the circle traced. 'The indignant Vicomte left the stage at the second act.'"

Nothing could throw more light on this criticism of Sainte-Beuve, nothing could inform us better about Chateaubriand's political conduct, than his correspondence with Mme. Récamier. We give some of his letters from the text of the originals, those that Mme. Lenormant has omitted or only partially published.²

"Do not let us distress ourselves beforehand. If the things take place, we shall be buying with a few months a long and more certain future, but I persist in believing that nothing will be done, and you will see that I am right. Good night, angel. Until to-morrow morning, and then to-morrow evening at eight. I love you."

Wednesday evening.

(First volume of the collection. No. 14.)

"Do not distress yourself, my beautiful angel. I love you and I shall always love you. I shall never change. I shall write to you. I will soon come back, and whenever you order me to do so. All this will not last long. And then I shall be yours for ever. Good night. I shall write from Calais the day after to-morrow. Monday evening."

(First volume. No. 15.)

"You will find this line on waking as usual. You see that nothing will change *in our life* if you do not change. I am

¹ *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, I, p. 167, note 2.

² We print in italics the portions that have not been published by Mme. Lenormant.

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just going to get into the carriage. It is 5.30.¹ We shall soon meet again. I will write from Calais. *I love my beautiful angel for life.* *Tuesday morning.*

(First volume. No. 16.—Compare *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 387 and 388.)

“Two little notes from you are worth more than the eternal letters with which I worry you. Affairs here overwhelm me to such a degree that I have not time to breathe. I am beginning to succeed in politics, and I have given to our diplomacy a character which is in accordance with that fine name François,² which I bear. I am merely applying myself to raising us once more : we have been greatly lowered. I am exercising hospitality as much as possible. I have all the French travellers who arrive here sought out, no matter what their opinions may be, and I invite them to my house. Yesterday I made my first appearance in society. I was very much bored at a *rout*. I have not been well since I came here. I have frightful nights. The climate is detestable. If there is not war there will be a Congress. You know that this is our secret and our hope. I told you that the King received me wonderfully well. I am expecting a line from you on Tuesday. As you cannot tell me all that I should like to hear, give me at least some news about your people in France. Lord Bristol has not arrived yet. At least he will talk to me about you. *Do not forget the Chantilly Forest.* London, April 23rd, 1822.”

(First volume. No. 23.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 392–393.)

“*My little note is icy, but is yours any more pleasant? Do you forget the constraint I am in when writing to you, and am I to hold you responsible for this same constraint? As soon as I have the opportunity of writing to you otherwise, you will never again complain.*

“I am solely occupied with political affairs here. They are grave and immense. One part of my rôle consists in going into society, so that when I have been at work all day I am

¹ Lenormant, 8.30.

² Lenormant, Français.

obliged to dress and go out at half-past eleven at night. Think what torture it is for me. I am hurrying through with my household arrangements so that I may be able to receive from the 1st of May. I still doubt about my success, for I am short of everything.

“I have no difficulty in guessing who made your Ministry. There is no common sense about it, and when we fall the men you mention would not be the ones to replace us. But, believe me, we shall beat our enemies, if only they will listen to me. I have written a strong letter to Paris. I regret the little nun’s cell every day. If ever I enter it again I will never leave it. *And the forest? Will you come there?*”

“London, 25th.

“I have made my peace with Mathieu.”

(First volume. No. 24.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 393–394—Mme. Lenormant completes the date.)

“May 3rd, 1822.

“I am really grieved to see that you are so distressed about the fate of this unfortunate young man as to forget all your friends. Alas, we have causes enough for suffering of our own without adding to them the troubles of outsiders.

“I see, from what you tell me and from what all my friends write, that whilst I am arranging the affairs of the royalists abroad things are being undone at home. I am doing all I can, nevertheless. I have written to Mathieu, to Villèle, to Corbière. I have warned them of the danger. My conscience is at peace. If they fall, I shall be very sorry for them. As to me, I shall go back to private life with joy, and I promise never to depart from it again as long as I live. That at least will be the way never to leave you.

“A Congress is still talked of for September. Be on the watch about it. I must go to it, in order to come back to Paris. All our plans, as you know, are based on the Congress.

“I am still thought a great deal of here. I wish that my Paris friends could feel a little the value of my services, not for the sake of what these services are really worth in themselves, but

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because they would not then be so desirous of keeping me aloof.

“ You only write me a few words. And yet I am in great need of consolation. Try to conquer your indolence.”

(First volume. No. 26.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 395-396.)

“ May 14th.

“ Do you, too, want to make me curse the post? All the letters I receive from Paris are complaints, whilst from foreigners I get a hearty welcome, which I have only endeavoured to obtain for the sake of my French friends. These friends seem to be agreed on harassing me. My political friends write me furious things, and want me to leave everything to save them. Mme. de Duras is half wild because of you: Mme. de Ch.¹ is grumbling, and now you begin to groan. That is surely enough, and there is nothing left for me but to go and drown myself.

“ It is a pity, though. I was beginning to be in great luck. Yesterday I gave my first diplomatic dinner and with absolute success. On the 26th, the Duke of York² is coming to dine with me, and the King longs to do the same. *Diplomatic jealousies alone prevent him from coming, and perhaps he will ignore them.* I see this increasing favour with pleasure, because all that exalts me makes me necessary, and by my becoming necessary, there will be an earlier chance of seeing each other again. You do not deserve all these calculations, because you scold me just as much as the others do. In Heaven’s name do not join the crowd. *Think of Chantilly,* and write to me in a way that will console me.

“ May 14th.”³

(First volume. No. 29.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 398-399.)

“ May 17th.

“ Yesterday’s post did not bring me any letter from you. I am the only person in the world whose attachment is always

¹ And not Mme. de D., Mme. de Chateaubriand. (Lenormant.)

² Compare *M.O.T.*, IV, pp. 253 and 254: “On the 26th the Duke of York came to dine at the Embassy; George IV was very much tempted to do me the same honour, but he feared the diplomatic jealousies of my colleagues.”

³ This letter is dated, then, twice.

the same and who is always exact in friendship. When people forget me they cause me pain such as I would not cause anyone. The elections are now almost over. The Liberals are beaten, and really they had a great many things in their favour. Will they still believe¹ that they are popular, that they are in the majority, the strongest and the cleverest? The *little Ministry* will triumph; I predicted that. I am still getting on very well here, and am winning more authority every day. I hope, though, whatever happens, to see you soon, either on leave of absence or on my way to the Congress, if there should be a Congress, or by becoming Minister. In short, I shall see you when you wish it.

"*M. de Broglie and M. de Staél* have been to see me.² I have invited them to dinner for next Wednesday. I hope to have a line from you on Sunday. I have great need of it."

(First volume. No. 30.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I., pp. 399-400.)

"LONDON, May 24th, 1822.

"No letter again from you by yesterday's post! You are not ill, as *M. de Broglie* and *A. de Staél* who dined with me yesterday told me that you were very well. What is the matter then? What have you against me? What have I done to you? Really this is not nice and not kind. When one pretends to care for a person one has an explanation if there are supposed subjects for complaint. I only trouble about arranging my life for your sake, and I have left in your hands the history of that life. I have given myself up unreservedly, and you break all this off by a cold silence as though I had never been anything to you. I am killing myself in trying to find out what can be the matter. I have examined my conscience, and I do not find anything with which to reproach myself. I told you about *Mme. de D.*'s jealousies, which I believe were fanned by *Adrien*. How can that affect you? I begged you, I believe, to be rather on your guard with *Adrien*, who loves mischief-making and who

¹ Lenormant: "Do they still believe?"

² Lenormant: *M. de Staél* and *M. de Broglie*.

lives on trifling things. Is that an insult and wrong? Listen: this is my last letter, for I shall not write again until I have had a letter from you. I will spare you the trouble of seeking a pretext for giving me up. But no, you never could do that!"

(First volume. No. 32. Unpublished letter.)

"*May 31st, 1822.*

"With what joy I saw the little handwriting again! Each post that arrived without a single word from you gave me a pang at my heart. Am I not rather foolish to love you like this, and why do you take such advantage of your power? Why did you believe for a moment what anyone could tell you? I mortally hate the people who wronged me so, whoever they may be. We will explain everything to each other, but in the meantime let us only love each other, as that is the way to get rid of our enemies. If you had gone to Italy I should have followed you there.

"Speaking of Italy, the Congress appears to be more probable than ever. I shall need you for attacking Mathieu. I will give you the signal. Prince d'Esterhazy, the Austrian Ambassador in London, will go to the Congress. You will realize how much we can make of that circumstance.¹ This Congress will have the immense advantage of bringing me back to Paris, and all these politics signify nothing else, except that I am dying to see you again. I did not write to you by the last post: I was too sad and too unhappy about your silence. You will have seen that very well by the letters you received before this one.

"I want our friends to triumph, in spite of their numberless mistakes. I like the Abbé Frayssinous very much, but I do not think opinion is ripe enough yet for putting a priest at the head of Public Education. Delalot would be displeased, and Delalot is a power in the House. Only a division in the Right side could overthrow our friends. *I must tell you again that I love you."*

¹ "Shall be able to make," Lenormant.

(First volume. No. 33.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 400, 401, 402.)

“LONDON, June 11th, 1822.

“Forget Chantilly? Have I not spoken of it to you several times, but you were in one of your very unjust moods. Yes, I shall go, but shall you keep your promises? If you were to deceive me then, it would be the last time in your life. It is for you to decide. Fix the month, the day, the hour, and I shall be at the rendezvous.”

“The great affair has now commenced. I enclose a copy of the letter I am writing to Mathieu. I am almost in hopes that he will give in. There is not one reasonable objection for him to make, and the letter is certainly that of a good friend. I have been careful not to wound his pride nor his heart. You can tell him now frankly that I appear to have a keen desire to go to the Congress, and you will carry this through with your habitual prudence and power. Think what happiness if we succeed, and how that will arrange everything! I am hopeful, as I always have succeeded in a connected plan, and you know I always believed that, in order to accomplish our destinies, it would have to be England first and then the Congress. I shall then have before me either the most honourable retirement or the ministry the most useful to France. I always thought that I should not be considered ripe by the blockheads until I had occupied a high place outside the Ministry. By mounting, rung by rung, I am much surer of remaining at the top. Already my three months' stay in England has done me immense good politically. Speaking of England, do you know that I have had Carle and Horace Vernet to dinner, and that these two rabid Liberals appeared very well satisfied with me? *I did my best too for M. de Broglie; he is now in Paris. Your M. de Staël has stayed behind. Do say a few sweet things to me in reply to my sweet things.”*¹

(First volume. No. 36.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 415-416.)

“LONDON, 14th.²

“I sent a letter for you to M. Le Moine by the last post.³ I enclosed in this letter another long letter that I had written

¹ Mme. Lenormant (p. 416) modifies this ending.

² And not the 20th. (Lenormant). ³ Lenormant: Lemoine.

to M. de Montmorency about the Congress, and I asked you to second my request. I fancy, from what I hear to-day, that M. Le Moine has gone on a journey to Champagne. I am very much afraid that, as my parcel would arrive in his absence, what was for you may not reach you. *I replied to you, too, on the subject of Chantilly. I have only forgotten the house near the valley. I feel about this a mixture of sentiments which you will divine. Do as you like. As I am not writing to you by my usual intermediary, I am limiting myself to-day to these few words.* I am dying to hear whether you have received *the letter and the copy* of which I tell you. You do not say whether you told Mme. de Boigne what I had the happiness to do for her. I am on very good terms with M. de Staël, but I do not like to think of that Château on the banks of the Loire."

(First volume. No. 31.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 400.)

"June 23rd, 1822.

"I had heard of the resignation of M. de Blacas in the quickest way before anyone else, and it was easy for me to guess that the Duc de Laval would take his place. You see, therefore, that I know the destination of the latter. Mathieu even wrote me this and in his letter, which is very friendly, he said to me graciously when speaking of Blacas: '*You are thus free of one powerful rival for the Congress.*'

"From these words my appointment would be certain if Mathieu did not himself want to go to the Congress. He will want to go, perhaps, if Lord Londonderry goes. He would make a great mistake, and would compromise himself very much; but I cannot tell him this and if he insists on going there is only one resource—that is, that he should take me with him. Or here is another idea, which I confide to you in the utmost secrecy for you to use as you like. If Mathieu should go to Vienna or to Florence, why should he not in his absence confide to me the Foreign Affairs for the time being? Mathieu ought to know my loyalty, and he knows that nothing in the world would prevent my handing the charge back to him again on his return. Can he think or say the

same of any of his other ministerial colleagues to whom this post might be confided? This proof of friendship and confidence from Mathieu would touch me greatly, and he must know what a political friend I am. That is my idea; think it over. But I should prefer the Congress.¹ *My beautiful angel would come to Italy. I do not much regret the eight pages; they were unjust, cruel, untrue. You will see what I have to say to you in the little cell.*

(First volume. No. 38.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 422–423.)

“ Friday, July 12th, 1822.

“ Come now, I would rather know your folly than read mysterious and angry notes. I guess or I think I guess now. It is apparently that woman about whom the Queen of Sweden’s friend spoke to you? But tell me, have I any way to prevent Vernet, Mlle. Le Vert,² who writes declarations to me, and thirty artists, men and women, from coming to England to try and earn money? And if I had been guilty, do you imagine that such caprices could be the least insult to you, and would take away from you anything of what I have given you for ever? *You have not been punished in this way, but you must agree that, after four years of not keeping your word and of deceptions, you deserve a slight infidelity. I have seen the time when you wanted to know whether I had any mistresses, and you appeared to be indifferent about it. Well, no, I have not any.* You have been told a thousand untruths; I recognize my worthy friends in that. Besides, make your mind easy; the lady is leaving and will never come back to England, but perhaps you will now want me to stay here because of this. Quite useless, for whatever the event, Congress or no Congress, ministry or no ministry, I cannot live so long a time separated from you, and I am determined to see you at all costs.

“ I never write to Berlin; La Borie³ sometimes gives a letter from me to Villèle, and I do not explain anything to him. I always want the Congress, whatever may be the thing treated, because I am sure of doing honour to myself there, and only

¹ Lenormant finishes the letter at this phrase.

² Lenormant: Levert.

³ Lenormant: Laborie.

to act in the opinion of France. I am sure that it is the best step for me, and that it is by this that I shall arrive at the Ministry. You are flattering yourself in vain, and people are deceived and are deceiving you if they try to make you see that there is a more prompt way to arrive. I certainly want the most prompt way, but I do not believe in it. Anyhow, I am very tranquil about all that. I have a fixed plan in my head. Now that I have proved that I could succeed on a large stage of affairs and politics, my pride is saved, and I only aspire to live in peace near you. At the least cavilling I should take a decided step. I do not say this, I do not threaten; I am cordial and friendly in my correspondence, but I am watching my opportunity, and if it should be offered to me I should seize it.

“Whilst you are quarrelling with me groundlessly for the sake of I do not know whom, Mme. de D. is tormenting me on account of the Abbaye. On that point I do feel guilty. Reward me, then, with sweet words and a confession of your injustice, of the hardships you make me suffer. As long as I live I shall live for you.”¹

(First volume. Nos. 41 and 42.—*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 425, 426, 427.)

The last letter of September 3rd has been shortened by Mme. Lenormant. After asking Mme. Récamier to meet him at Chantilly, the Ambassador adds:² “This letter will reach you on Friday. Answer me immediately and by return of post by a line addressed *poste restante, Calais*. I shall get it there in passing through, and I shall find a way

¹ Mme. Lenormant gives the following letters (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 427 and following). In the letter of Friday, August 2nd, 1822 (1st volume, No. 43), line 6, read *she* and not *they*. The end is as follows in the original: “Let us wait. But remember that I must see you soon; I love you as much as in the early days.” In the letter of August 16th, 1822 (1st volume, No. 47), read at the end, “I am waiting, my very beautiful angel, for news from you.” In the letter dated Wednesday evening, 1822 (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 434, 1st volume, No. 49), read at the end, “. . . . your handwriting. I kiss it. Write to me.” This letter in the original is dated Wednesday evening, 21st. Page 437, line 18, read, “Ah, if you would come and stay with me.” Line 21, read “I am at your feet in the little cell.”

² Letters from Chateaubriand, Volume I, No. 53. M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

of telling you the time for the rendezvous if you accept. But in Heaven's name beware of Adrien. The harm that man has done me is incalculable. It is he who has fanned Mathieu's secret jealousy and Mme. de D.'s outbursts. How was it that you did not guess why I did not send you Marcellus, and why he did not even know . . ." (the end of this phrase is missing).

One also wonders how Chateaubriand's intercourse with the Duchesse de Duras was progressing during his Ambassadorship in London. From this time forth it was only the political power and the influence of his old friend that he cultivated. And yet the letters from the Duchesse to René are always delicious, full of indulgence and of affectionate wisdom. She wrote to him after his departure : "Yesterday I stayed there crying like a child,"¹ and then this phrase, which is truly exquisite : "I have had all my clocks stopped, so that I shall not continue to hear those hours strike when you no longer come."² Informed by Adrien of the ever-increasing intimacy between René and Juliette, she begins her counsels once more : "It seems to me that all your follies are scarcely seasonable, and that you are old enough to be wise."³ The letter dated April 5th, 6th, and 7th is more explicit. "I remember that you said to me in one of your old letters, 'I am quite willing to be a dupe, but I want to know that I am one.' A friendship like mine does not admit of being shared. It has the inconveniences of love. And I must confess that it has not the advantages, but we are old enough for that to be out of the question. To know that you tell others all that you tell me, that you let them know your affairs, your sentiments, is unendurable to me, and it will be like this eternally."⁴

As M. Bardoux has thoroughly proved to us,⁵ Chateaubriand, in his desire to represent France at the Congress, pursued a double plan of action. The first, the details of which we have seen, would affect Mathieu de Montmorency.

¹ Bardoux, *La Duchesse de Duras*, p. 282. ² *Ibid.*, p. 284.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 290 and 291.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 295 and following.

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The other, through Mme. de Duras, would touch M. de Villèle.¹ The duchess made more than one allusion to this double manœuvre, about which she knew. Chateaubriand wrote to her on the 23rd of April, in a moment of ill-humour : "If you continue I shall not write to you again."² But he did write again, for he had too much need of his friend. It was necessary that she should gain the day with Villèle, who hesitated and had to be persuaded. It even seemed as though he would refuse. It will be noticed that the reasons Chateaubriand gives to Mme. de Duras and to Mme. Récamier are quite different ones. The Duchesse declares to him on the 5th of May : "There is not a line of your letters which does not say to me 'I am hiding something from you.' I know you as I know myself, and everything is possible to you except to deceive me. What does this mean, my dear brother ? Is our friendship like the one of which M. de Laval said that there was not enough in it to hold out to the end ? I should very much regret, if this were so, not having died in one of those severe illnesses which brought me to the very edge of the grave. I should at least have taken away with me the illusion which was the delight of my younger days."³ And this time again Chateaubriand replies with more skill than frankness : "Nothing could be more false and absurd than all these ideas of yours. I do not know anyone in the world whose mind and heart are more in harmony than yours with all that I feel and experience. . . . After that do you want me to repulse all the kindness I meet with ? I cannot do this."⁴ "No," answered Mme. de Duras, with exquisite grace ; "I do not wish you to repulse all kindness. Ah God, all who care for you—are they not something to me ?"⁵

Mme. de Duras had a conversation with Villèle in June,⁶ and very cleverly made the most to him of the reasons that Chateaubriand had set forth. Mathieu declared that he was referring the matter to the Council. The Ambassador, grate-

¹ See in the book by M. Bardoux (p. 296 and following) the correspondence between Chateaubriand and Mme. de Duras.

² *Ibid.*, p. 301.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 308 and 309.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 311 and 312.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 340 and following.

ful to his friend, wrote her a warmer letter, and he certainly owed her this little attention. A pamphlet entitled *Correspondance privée* had treated her intercourse with Chateaubriand in the most odious way. A very interesting letter from Mme. de Duras, dated July 10th,¹ gives us her conversation with Villèle, and shows how much difficulty she had to win the day. "M. de Chateaubriand at Verona," she said, "would be an ornament for France. The sovereigns would have some one with whom to talk. That was my *master-stroke*." The argument took effect. It is scarcely credible that at this moment, in his letters, Chateaubriand was unjust, bitter, and almost aggressive to the Duchesse de Duras. Admirable friend as she was, she would not allow herself to be discouraged. Whilst the terrible egoist was writing her those hurtful letters, which should be read in order to realize to what lengths pride and self-confidence can go,² she was bestirring herself, scheming, working, crushing the rebellion of her own heart, accepting excuses that were as brief and vague as the reproaches had been long and detailed, and all the time continuing to write admirable letters. Through Mme. de Duras we have another aspect of the affair which we have already seen from another side; through her we know what Villèle said of Montmorency. "You have no idea," she wrote to Chateaubriand on the 15th of August, "what Villèle thinks of the nullity of Mathieu."³

The Duchesse de Duras was jealous, though, of Mme. Récamier. "You will know the decision through her," she says to her friend. "She will have that advantage over me; she has many others."⁴ The news reached her at last, and she wrote a long, cheerful letter to Chateaubriand, but not without adding an allusion to Mme. Récamier. "You will hurry to the Abbaye on landing," she says. "Did you confide to her the part of winning Mathieu over in this affair? She has not conciliated him much for you, as I can assure you he held out finely."⁵

Jean-Jacques Ampère had tried to take advantage of Chateaubriand's absence for making progress in Juliette's

¹ Bardoux, p. 354 and following.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

² *Ibid.*, p. 369.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 384 and 385.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

affections. According to Scherer,¹ "the years 1822 and 1823 were the culminating point for the passion of Jean-Jacques." We need not be astonished that Mme. Récamier maintained her sang-froid when listening to the declarations of her young friend, which were more and more ardent as time went on. It was not that she was mistress of herself, but, on the contrary, that she no longer was so ; that she belonged to another, and that it was not possible to divide her favours. Towards June, 1822, Jean-Jacques appears to us more excitable than ever. He thanks Mme. Récamier for having "given him a few moments, a few hours of trouble, delight, and delicious sadness."² He loved her profoundly. "My works, my projects, my successes, my worries, all belong to you ; it is you who have inspired me, consoled me, educated me ; I am what I am through you, and I like it to be thus."³ Alexis de Jussieu, Jean-Jacques's friend, was also received at the Abbaye. He was there one evening when, in the presence of Prince Augustus, Mlle. Mante recited some poetry.⁴ When Jean-Jacques was away at Vanteuil, Alexis de Jussieu kept him informed of what took place in the little cell. During the summer Mme. Récamier went to Montmorency.⁵ Jean-Jacques corresponded with her : he protested that he could neither live without her nor for her, that he saw the impossibility of his destiny, but without being able to give up his sole joy.⁶ The worthy André-Marie wrote to his son from Lyons to tell him of the success which his tragedy *Rosemonde* had obtained with their friends Dugas and Bredin.⁷ Jean-Jacques was working hard at this time, but the thought of Mme. Récamier haunted him and made him unhappy. He quite understood that all hope was forbidden for him. He said so in a letter to Juliette dated September, 1822, after Chateaubriand's return to Paris. "There is one person who has the power of moving you and distressing you, and at the present time he is no doubt with you. If he does not fascinate you, he charms you ; if he is not beloved, he is regretted ; he has a brilliant destiny, glory, a poetical imagination : does

¹ *Études*, V, p. 97. Compare p. 103.

² *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 211.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

he let you remember the one who has no rank, no name?"¹ Ampère had a horror of Chateaubriand's political principles.² He suffered very much when he saw that Mme. Récamier went to Paris to receive him and he beseeched her to consent to a journey to Italy.³

In Chateaubriand's absence Mme. Récamier had intervened to save Coudert, who was compromised in the first Saumur conspiracy, in December, 1821. In February, 1822, the second court-martial of the fourth military division of Tours condemned Coudert to death.⁴ At the beginning of March his elder brother, Eugène Coudert, came on his own account to the Abbaye-aux-Bois to beg Mme. Récamier to intervene.⁵ He brought with him a letter from Benjamin Constant.⁶ M. de Marcellus and M. de Lascours seconded Mme. Récamier, who at once took active steps. The Duchesse de Duras, who was asked by the Duc de Laval to speak to the Keeper of the Seals, declared that she had no influence, and that "the King had forbidden anyone to speak to him on that subject."⁷ The wife of Marshal Macdonald promised that her husband should do all he could to interest the Ministers in the fate of the young men compromised in this affair.⁸ Mathieu de Montmorency showed great "curtness" and hardness.⁹ M. de Doudeauville was "made of iron." However, thanks perhaps to Mme. du Cayla,¹⁰ Mme. Récamier was able to save Coudert, who was only condemned to five years of prison. On the 14th of March, the condemned man announced to his benefactress that the first sentence, thanks to her, had been repealed. On the 22nd of March, she received a letter from Eugène Coudert thanking her.¹¹ Sirejean, who was compromised in the same affair, was not so fortunate, as his death sentence was put into execution May 2nd, 1822.

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 226.

² *Ibid.*, p. 231.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 373.

⁵ Duchesse d'Abrantès, *Mém. sur la Restauration*, V, p. 140 and following.

⁶ Published in the *Lettres de Benjamin Constant à Mme. R.*, p. 313 and following.

⁷ Letter copied by Ballanche (*Biog. de Mme. R.*, pp. 233-234).

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.

⁹ *Souvenirs du Duc de Broglie*, II, p. 269 and following.

¹⁰ According to the letter from the Duchesse de Duras.

¹¹ Ballanche, *Biog. de Mme. R.*, p. 234 and following.

This intervention strengthened the public opinion with regard to Mme. Récamier's Liberalism. She was certainly in a delicate position. In 1822 she had no better friends than Mathieu de Montmorency and Chateaubriand, both of them strongly anti-Liberal, but she preserved her independence of mind and her former sympathies. She criticized Chateaubriand's politics rather severely at the very moment when she loved him. "M. de Chateaubriand," she said to the Duc de Broglie,¹ "dreams of plans of conduct like plans of his works, and composes fine-sounding phrases." Mme. Récamier's charity, too, extended in all directions, as the following letter proves. It was written at Coppet, on the 25th of September 1822,² by Miss Randall, Mme. de Staél's friend :

"After worrying you by my perseverance in favour of the Duc de Berry's poor children, I cannot resist the pleasure of writing to thank you, dear Madame, for what you have done for them and for their unfortunate mother. I know that you were good enough to go yourself and judge of the truth as to her poverty, and that she owes to you the help which saved her from the despair of the moment. Poor woman, it appears that, affected by her cruel sufferings, she believes that she is dangerously ill, and she is heartbroken with dread as to what is to become of her children. I am trusting entirely to M. de Ch. It seems to me that it cannot be so very difficult to place these poor children in some Government school until they are old enough to enter the service. You did not answer me, and I am not free enough from all selfishness not to complain of this. I was so sure of your benevolence that I had no doubt about your persevering charity for these poor unfortunates. But this is not all, and I ought to have asked you for a little benevolence with regard to me. Finally, I want to repeat to you what was said to me, namely, the expression of the most touching gratitude of this poor woman, whom you have saved from real despair and from the direst poverty. Adieu, dear Madame.

"Yours very devotedly,
"RANDALL."

¹ *Souvenirs*, II, pp. 294-295, dated January 22nd, 1823.

² Post-mark September 29th, 1822. M. Ch. de Loménié's collection (packet of letters from the Duchesse de Broglie).

At the end of the summer of 1822, Mathieu de Montmorency and Chateaubriand started for Verona, and the Duc de Laval went to Rome.

Adrien de Montmorency had been sent as Ambassador to Rome in 1821. He had again begun to correspond with Juliette, and he does not spare her some sly allusions. On the 20th of September, 1822, he writes to her from Parma as follows : " You surely take some journeys to the city to see the man of the Chantilly Forest. If I am not mistaken, you will recognize his name from this romantic designation."¹ " How much I should like to know," he adds, " the dispositions more or less kindly, ambitious, conciliating, or hostile of your correspondent, *M. Lemoine*. Let us always call him by this name, that of his confidant, if my memory is not at fault."² He returns to the same subject at the close of his letter. " I am tormented at having no news of the man in whom you are interested, as I am. Will he soon be back ? I shall only know when I am in Rome."

Juliette scarcely replied to the melancholy Ambassador who accused her of needing the " actual presence " of her friends in order to be nice to them.³ She had promised to go again to Italy,⁴ but her friend had no hope that she would do so. He was wretched and very disconsolate in all his letters.

On his journey to the Verona Congress the Minister of Foreign Affairs did not forget his duty to Mme. Récamier. He wrote to her from Mayence, September 2nd, 1822, as follows :

" I will not delay any longer, sweet friend, giving you news direct, which you were kind enough to wish for. . . . Everywhere I take my faithful thoughts with me—that is to say, the thought of you, of your little evenings, of your perfect friendship. Keep that for me in spite of the return from London."⁵

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² " In this fresh exile I already have some old friends. M. Lemoine is resting here. He was M. de Montmorin's secretary, and was bequeathed to me by Mme. de Beaumont. With him I could have, nearly every evening when I was in Paris, the simple conversation that I like so much. . . ." *M.O.T.*, VI, p. 10.

³ Unpublished letter of October 3rd, 1822.

⁴ According to the same letter.

⁵ Unpublished letter No. 125 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

Writing from Vienna, September 25th, he excuses himself with regard to a delay, and mixes up in the most curious way political information with his expressions of friendship.¹

"I am to blame and I owe you reparation, sweet friend," he writes. "I did not write to you from here at the first opportunity. The terrible number of business letters I was obliged to write made my hand almost unable to hold a pen. I was going to wait for the next post when I received your sweet letter of the 2nd, dated from that valley where I should so much have liked to spend a few moments with you, instead of going in search of great political and travelling adventures. You had to come back, then, to see the new arrival. I received a letter from him also from Paris, announcing his departure for Verona towards the 25th at the latest. It is in the order of things possible that I shall go and spend a fortnight with him in that city, very reluctantly, though, I can assure you. I do not know myself how pleased he is about it, but there are considerations higher than these which would make me decide to sacrifice my own tastes if necessary, and I am waiting now for the return of a courier sent to Paris, in accordance with the formal wish of the sovereigns. They will start the 1st and 2nd of October, and decidedly without having seen the Duke of Wellington, who could not arrive before the 30th. They have sent to meet him and to conduct him to Verona. It is that which has made my movements so uncertain, as the absence of this English Plenipotentiary had reduced everything here to simple conversations, which may have their real utility, but which are less positive than conferences. You see, sweet friend, that it may be I shall arrive a fortnight or a month later. I do not want to anticipate, but I do not think it can be longer. We shall have a great deal to say. I attach great value to your sweet friendship, and I always remember certain things you said to me about an old and a new friend. The first is very jealous of preference, and thinks he deserves it, not out of pride, but something more real and deeper. To finish the subject of these two persons, I will tell you that the

¹ The first part of this letter is published in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 439 and 440. We give it here entirely and from the original, No. 126 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

first does not worry any more about the second thinking that things are more due to the kindness of a third person than to his.¹ He does not think this just, but so much the worse for the one who has such ideas. Adieu, sweet friend. The pleasant evenings in the fourth storey flat I miss very much. It is a very dull arrangement to give the best part of the day to business affairs and another part to curiosity. One's heart closes up or else goes out towards absent friends."

Certainly this letter bears traces of the haste in which it was written, and Mathieu's style has neither the brilliancy nor the elegance so natural to Chateaubriand; but it is piquant to trace how the same regret, in the midst of the most serious affairs, links these two Plenipotentiaries to Paris. On the 15th October, from Vicenza, Mathieu de Montmorency sends to the Abbaye his impressions and the assurance of his fidelity.² On the 17th, when he writes from Verona, he has met Chateaubriand.³ "The first approach," he said, "was very gracious; I hope that we may keep on the same footing. This is quite my intention, and I fancy he is of the same way of thinking." Mathieu de Montmorency put a certain sly mischievousness into the way he observed and described his collaborator, but it was a mischievousness that was always courteous and in good taste.⁴ The following month the pleasant terms still continued, in spite of the "stiffness" and "unsociability" of Chateaubriand. It was armed peace.⁵ At the end of November Mathieu left Verona; all storms had been avoided.⁶

Chateaubriand says nothing about this period in his *Mémoires*.⁷ He did not want to repeat what he had already told. In 1838, that is a year before the time when he wrote his *ninth book of the third part*, he had published two volumes,

¹ Confused allusion to the frequent intervention of Mme. R. in favour of Chateaubriand. Compare another letter from M. de Montmorency (No. 119 of the collection) ". . . the man about whom we sometimes talk too much, but who prefers you for an interpreter to himself."

² See *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 441 and following.

³ Compare his letter to Villèle dated October 18th, 1822, *Mém. et Corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III, p. 135 and following; see specially p. 146.

⁴ See *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 444 and 445, letter No. 128.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 448 and 449. Letter 129 of the collection.

⁶ See *Ibid.*, p. 452. Letter 130 of the collection.

⁷ See Biré's remarks, Vol. IV of his edition, p. 499 and following.

entitled *Congrès de Vérone, Guerre d'Espagne, Négociations, Colonies espagnoles.*¹ It is in this work that we must look for the general history of its author from October 1822 to June 1824.

Mme. Lenormant has published the letters Chateaubriand wrote from Verona to Mme. Récamier.² She has shortened the last letter by one phrase. It is written as follows in the original, and it gives an idea of the others :

“VERONA, Thursday evening,
“December 12th, 1822.

“I shall see you again at last. I leave to-morrow by the wish of M. de Metternich and the Emperor Alexander. The latter has agreed to establish a correspondence with me. You see that I have made up for the time that they tried to make me lose. I have a great many things to tell you, and I am not as pleased with your friend as you are. What am I going to find in Paris? But, above all, how are you going to be for me? Just think that we shall have to change our way of living. They have just come for my letter. We shall meet soon. I shall be in Paris towards the 20th. Good-bye. My heart is beating with joy. I have suffered a great deal here, but I have triumphed. Italy will be free, and I have an idea for Spain which will settle everything if it is followed.”

In order to have all Chateaubriand's correspondence with Mme. Récamier during the Verona Congress, the following note, dated by him October 31st, must be added to the letters already published : “I have no more courage to write,” he says. “Another post yesterday without a word from you. This silence makes me despair. Mathieu leaves in a week, and I stay here three weeks after him. In Heaven's name write and tell me what you wish to do, and what is to become of me. We are to have the first sitting of the Congress this very evening.”³

¹ Paris, Delloye.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 441, 445, 446, 447, 448, and following.

³ M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Letters from Chateaubriand, Vol. I, No. 54. See *Chateaubriand et la guerre d'Espagne, d'après les documents*

In order to have everything complete, the letters Chateaubriand wrote to Mme. Récamier should be compared with those he addressed to Mme. de Duras.¹ But we have already made a comparison of this kind with the letters written during his Ambassadorship in London. The results would be very much the same, so that we will proceed with our history.

Mathieu de Montmorency, on his return to Paris, received from King Louis XVIII the title of Duke. He refused to be called the Duc de Vérone, so that he was only Duc Mathieu de Montmorency.² Chateaubriand remained at Verona, but he was very uneasy about the agitations and divisions which he felt there would be in Paris. At all risks he declared himself prepared to follow Villèle “in good or evil fortune.”³ A disagreement had arisen between Villèle and Montmorency on the subject of a note to send to the Powers. “M. de Montmorency, having manifested an opinion opposed to that of the King, held to it firmly enough to prefer leaving the Ministry rather than to sacrifice to his Majesty his own way of looking at things.”⁴ He tendered his resignation on the 25th of December. M. de Montmorency was a partisan, in the Spanish affair, of a system which consisted in seconding the Spanish royalists by means of pecuniary assistance and by sending them arms and munitions. The King accepted his resignation, and authorized Villèle to offer the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Chateaubriand, who had just returned to Paris.⁵ Chateaubriand refused at first. He wrote to Villèle, on the 26th of November, 1822, that he could not accept this office; that he had not always had reason to be pleased with M. de Montmorency, but that he was nevertheless supposed to be a friend of his, and that it would be disloyal to take his place.⁶ The whole of this long letter of Chateaubriand's ought to be quoted here, as it is a master-piece of clever

inédits. Two articles by the Marquis de Gabriac in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, October 12th and November 1st, 1897.

¹ Bardoux, *La Duchesse de Duras*, p. 396 and following.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 454. *Mém. et Corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III p. 270.

³ *Mém. et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III, p. 263.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 283 and 284.

writing. At the very moment when he appears to be refusing he taxes his ingenuity to prove how necessary he is. The same day he writes to Mme. Récamier as follows : "Villèle proposed the office to me by the King's orders. I refused it. Mathieu did not deserve this sacrifice, on account of his behaviour to me, but I owed it to *you* and to my loyalty."¹

The tactics were always the same. Chateaubriand wished to be begged to accept. Pasquier explains this manœuvre very well. "M. de Chateaubriand was one of those men whom it is more dangerous to support than to fight against, and from whom one cannot get free when one has accepted them. When the Ministry was proposed to him he set up for being a man who feared the fatigues and difficulties of this office. His health was so bad. He had to be persuaded for some time, and it was necessary almost to insist in order to make him accept the power of which he was in reality longing to get possession."² When Chateaubriand had made up his mind he wrote the following letter to Villèle : "I am obeying the King's orders, my dear friend. You are now rewarded for your fidelity to me. I am coming loyally to your aid, but I do not anticipate much from my position. It will depend on you. The King kept me for more than an hour. Yours ever. You can have the decree published."³ The same day Chateaubriand said to Mme. Récamier : "I refused Villèle at noon. The King sent for me at four, and kept me an hour and a half preaching to me, while I was holding out all the time. Finally he *ordered* me to obey. I have obeyed. I am therefore remaining with you. But I shall perish in the Ministry. Yours."⁴ Mme. Récamier exercised all her delicacy in remaining neutral in this affair in which two of her friends were at loggerheads. M. de Montmorency thanked her, and excused himself for having been "a little stiff" with Chateaubriand.⁵ She was anxious about the first conversation that should take place between the Minister leaving office and the Minister entering office, but Mathieu reassured her. "I have just come away from it," he said, "and I have only had

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 11.

² *Mém du Chancelier Pasquier*, V, p. 463.

³ *Mém et corr. du Comte de Villèle*, III, pp. 285-286.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 12. ⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 12 and 13.

to defend myself against assiduous attentions, excuses, and protestations. I believe I answered simply enough, without any ill temper, anger, or weakness, and I passed promptly to the details of affairs that I had to give him and that he received very well. . . .¹ No matter what he did, Chateaubriand could not conceal the pleasure it gave him “to sleep in this Minister’s bed.” He continued his habit of going every day, as he had done in the past, at *his* hour, to the little cell, and of writing “every day.”² This time again it was Ballanche who gave the exact note with regard to the situation. “I know,” he wrote to Mme. Récamier,³ “that as regards the *abdication*, in which you have so keen, naïve, and touching an interest, you would bear it much better if there were not at the same time an *elevation* which affects all your generous sympathies. In the midst of such perplexity and such intense emotion do you know what you ought to do? You ought to turn some of your thoughts towards this poor France, which certainly deserves to have a sacred altar in your noble heart.”

It is not for us to rewrite the history of Chateaubriand’s Ministry, although that history is interesting and full of lessons. As is well known, the year 1823 was taken up by questions of exterior politics, as M. de Villèle had decided, in order to be agreeable to the ultra-Royalists, to intervene in Spain in order to overthrow the Constitutional *régime*. Everyone knows how an army of a hundred thousand men, commanded by the Duc d’Angoulême, invaded Spain in March 1823, how the French after the Trocadero victory made Cadiz capitulate, and how, in September, Ferdinand was once more an absolute monarch. Everyone knows, too, the celebrated history of the decree of Andujar, which the Duc d’Angoulême signed in order to try to put an end to the retaliation of the Spaniards against the Constitutionalists. Ferdinand, displeased with the French, approached Russia and Austria, so that France did not even gain by this intervention the alliance of a King for whom she had compromised herself. We have not to discuss in these pages this history, which has been so

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 14.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 14 and 15.

³ His letter published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 6 and 7, is not dated in the original. It is No. 68 in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

diversely criticized. The only questions we have to ask are the following ones: When once Chateaubriand was Minister, how did he behave with regard to Mme. Récamier? How did the regular friends of the Abbaye look upon the situation? How did Mme. Récamier herself use the influence which circumstances gave her?

Chateaubriand took his great rôle quite seriously. He was very proud of his oratorical successes, of a reply, that was very much applauded, to an interpellation made by General Foy.¹ *Le Constitutionnel* accused him of reading his speeches at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and Chateaubriand endeavoured on this occasion to put Mme. Récamier on her guard against her friends the Liberals. Paul-Louis Courier, as may be imagined, was not very fond of the new Minister and his politics. In the *Livret de Paul-Louis, vigneron*, which he brought out in 1823, he made fun of Chateaubriand's speech in which he related his conversation with the Emperor Alexander. Mme. Récamier came in for a slur in reference to this. "Take note," writes Courier, "that he had read this fine piece to the ladies, and when it was suggested that he should omit some of it before reading it to the Chamber, he would not do anything of the kind, basing his reason on the approval of Mme. Récamier. We cannot say now that there is nothing new. Has anyone ever seen the equal of that? Let us take the English, for example. Would Mr. Canning, when wishing to speak to the House on the subject of peace or of war, consult the ladies of the City?" Courier came to the conclusion that "men of letters in office generally ruin their talent and do not learn political affairs."

Chateaubriand nevertheless kept Mme. Récamier regularly informed about the work with which he professed to be overwhelmed—the deeds of the Cortès at Seville,² his anxiety about the taking of the Isle of Léon,³ about his speeches and his letters. Ballanche, it appears, did not approve of all his policy, and Chateaubriand avoided talking to him about it.⁴ To Mme. Récamier, though, he was more indulgent. He told her every-

¹ Letter of February 8th, 1823, to Mme. R., *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 19.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 23.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

thing, either by letter or in his everyday conversations at the Abbaye. She was, nevertheless, "very harsh."¹ He begged her to defend him against "unjust friends."² Unfortunately, we have not, as Mme. Lenormant herself declares,³ all Chateaubriand's correspondence with Juliette during this interesting time.

Young J. J. Ampère, more passionate and more jealous than ever, was no doubt the most infuriated with Chateaubriand. His Liberal convictions excited him against the triumphant Restoration and the Spanish war.⁴ Mathieu de Montmorency was also angry at times. He used certain rather harsh words to Juliette in a note dated January 29th, [1823]:⁵ "You so thoroughly forget the solitary people who nevertheless think a great deal about you, sweet friend, and who pay their debts as well, that I am a little piqued, and I spent a few hours in Paris without going to see you. How is it! Not one little word from you which might have delighted my solitude. You think no more of anyone but Ministers in office! That is very bad of you. I shall come and complain direct on Friday at eight. . . . I should never have been more warlike than M. de Chateaubriand, but I should have spoken more of the Allies." A few lines of the *little handwriting* sufficed, though, to bring about a retraction and to calm the worthy Mathieu's impatience.

The appointment of Chateaubriand made Adrien de Montmorency's situation appear difficult. He managed to glide over difficulties with that ease which is one of the charms of his character. He joked with Mme. Récamier on the subject. In his letter of February 12th, 1823, he says to her: "You pass over the subject of your two rival friends much too rapidly. What could you not tell about this, and who knows as much as you do about these matters? But I understand your reserve, and I do not expect you to risk penning indiscreet phrases to send four hundred leagues away. An hour's conversation would put me at ease about many things

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 29.

² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Corres. des Ampère*, I, p. 224.

⁵ The year is not given, but it was no doubt 1823. Unpublished letter, No. 133 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

which torment me.”¹ “Your situation,” he adds, “is one of the most complicated, extraordinary, and difficult that I know, and I am sure that you will come through it in an admirably natural way, so that your friendship will not wound anyone and that everyone will be satisfied with you.”²

Adrien de Montmorency had not much business to settle in his Embassy. He complained and congratulated himself by turns at only living in the midst of bows, politenesses, balls, and dinners. Enchanting music kept him from being dull.³ The Duke of Devonshire, on his way from Rome to England, took Juliette a keepsake from Adrien. It was a little wolf, “an emblem of the destiny and fortune of Rome,” placed on a piece of marble which Adrien had picked up in the ruins. “What will people say,” asked the witty Ambassador, “when for the five o’clock visit they see this little keepsake on your table?”⁴

The Duchess of Devonshire relieved Adrien’s solitude in Rome, and he agreed to forgive her for her Liberalism. “This woman,” he wrote to Mme. Récamier, “is like you, made of lodestone.”⁵ During the summer, at the season of the *aria cativa*, he went to Albano to stay at the agreeable and lively Cardinal Consalvi’s, who lent him his house. After crossing the Pyrenees, Adrien’s declarations now crossed the Alps, to reach the woman who at this moment was employing more diplomacy than the most skilful Ambassador.⁶ Juliette answered rarely, but Adrien did not get weary with the non-success of his requests. He wrote at every opportunity, and kept returning to what was essentially preoccupying him. “I am told,” he said to her on the 26th of May, “that you get out of all your difficulties admirably; that you have everyone’s confidences; that everyone is satisfied, and no one betrayed.”⁷ The Duchess sent her compliments with Adrien’s, and this was not out of place, for, hospitable and gentle, but

¹ Unpublished letter of February 12th, 1823, in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection.

² Same letter.

³ Same letter.

⁴ Unpublished letter of February 14th, 1823, in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection.

⁵ Letter of May 16th, 1823, in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection,

reigning by her very gentleness, she was in Rome what Mme. Récamier was, or had been, in Paris ; Ministers and Cardinals, painters and sculptors, were all most attentive to her.¹ The Abbé Canova had given Adrien the veiled Beatrice by his brother.²

The Pope's death caused the Ambassador grave anxiety, which he explained to Mme. Récamier. Cardinal Consalvi was greatly distressed at losing, by the death of his chief, a friend of twenty-four years' standing and a power just as old. Everything had to wait for the French Cardinals. Adrien de Montmorency philosophized : "We must remember," he said, "that this is the only election of crowns that the Revolutions have spared. No more Poland, Malta, Genoa, Venice, without reckoning the crowns of the ecclesiastical electors."³ Juliette when replying always refrained from speaking of Chateaubriand. She contented herself with assuring Adrien of the ministerial goodwill, in which he perhaps had reason not to believe.⁴ In order to avenge himself, Adrien refused to tell his "secrets";⁵ but his friend's reserve, inexplicable though it might seem to him, did not prevent him from remaining devoted, faithful, and affectionate.

Whatever may have been Mme. Récamier's influence over Chateaubriand, she only used it in the interests of her friends. In 1823 Benjamin Constant had two actions taken against him for newspaper articles. The one was for a *Lettre à M. Mangin, procureur-général près la cour de Poitiers*; the other for a *Lettre à M. de Carrère, sous-préfet de Saumur*.⁶ "These two actions were judged on the 6th and 13th of February, 1823. For the former he was condemned to a month's imprisonment and a fine of five hundred francs (twenty pounds); for the second the punishment was six weeks' imprisonment and a fine of a hundred francs."⁷ Although Constant at this epoch was no longer in regular correspondence with Mme. Récamier,⁸ he had recourse to her intervention. In a letter of January 1st, 1823, he

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² *Ibid.*

³ Unpublished letter of August 19th, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ Same letter.

⁵ Letter of September 3rd.

⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 15.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

begged her, as she was "one of the powers on earth,"¹ to grant him her good services with Chateaubriand. On the 5th of February he tells her that it is "the congregations who wish to see him condemned." "I know from you," he adds, "that M. de Chateaubriand does not approve of the progress and influence of the congregations." Having obtained, through the fresh judgment, the commutation of the sentence and the simple fine, he wrote on the 6th of February to thank Mme. Récamier, and he added wittily: "I am only able to fly with one wing, though, yet; I still have one affair and one prison from which you must free me. But I reckon so thoroughly on this that I have no longer any anxiety at all."

During his ministry Chateaubriand wanted to improve Barante's position for him. He asked Mme. Récamier to tell her friend of his intention, as it was well known that he was very hostile to the Ministry. "I fancy," wrote Barante,² "that he wants to make use of the pretext of my appointment to Copenhagen for giving me a salary for being unattached. I could not possibly be offended at this offer made quite unconditionally, but the idea of accepting it is inconceivable. I pretended not to understand, so that the proposal and the refusal had nothing explicit."

Mme. Récamier had continued her intercourse with Mme. Joseph Bonaparte. Napoleon's eldest brother had, after Waterloo, taken refuge in the United States, where he occupied himself with agronomy under the name of the Comte de Survilliers. Mme. Récamier intervened in order to obtain permission for him to come for a time to Paris.³ General Lamarque, celebrated for his rôle in the Opposition, also applied to Mme. Récamier.

"Would you believe," he wrote to the Baronne Dégerando, "that a formal prohibition has been published against speaking in any way of Spanish affairs? Would you believe that the

¹ *Lettres de Constant à Mme. R.*, p. 316 and following, and *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 16 and following. There are some slight differences between the two texts published by Mme. Lenormant.

² *Souvenirs*, III, p. 172, note 1.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, pp. 20 and 21. Compare Ballanche, *Biog. de Mme. R.*, p. 245 and following, and *C.L.A.R.*, No. 22.

Prefect, as M. de Puységur is called, has represented me to the Commandant General of the division, who fortunately knows me better, as a dangerous man, ready to incite to insurrection all my department? It is atrocious and ridiculous. There is certainly no one in the world, by taste and principle, less of a conspirator than I am; and if I wished to fill this odious rôle, it would not be the wretched and deserted department of the Landes, which four gendarmes would be able to bring to reason, that I should make the centre of my intrigues. Would you be kind enough to write a line about all this to the *angel of the Abbaye-aux-Bois*? She sees *M. de Chateaubriand*, and beauty must have some power over genius. Ask her to say that the Government will be eternal if I am its only enemy; that after having exercised high functions, after having paid my debt to misfortune, I only beg now for rest; that my sole ambition is to acclimatize the *acacias triacanthus* and the *faux ébeniers* in the department of the Landes, and that I am only conspiring against the aridity of our sandy soil, more than two thousand acres of which I bought last year.”¹

Finally, Mme. Rècamier intervened in the affair of Roger, who was being prosecuted with Caron for the Colmar affair. Roger was a former military man, master of the riding-school at Colmar.² Caron and he had endeavoured to provoke a movement in favour of Napoleon II. They were arrested by officers in disguise. Caron was condemned to death, and the sentence executed on the 1st of October. Roger was condemned to death by the Court of Assizes, but the sentence was commuted by the King into that of imprisonment for twenty years. This result was due in a great measure to the intercession of Mme. Récamier. The proof of this is to be found in a letter from Benjamin Constant,³ and above all in Roger's letter of thanks written to the Abbaye after the commutation

¹ Unpublished letter of May 22nd, 1823. Address, Mme. la Baronne De Gérando, Paris. In the collection of M. le Baron Lumbroso, Rome. See C.L.A.R., No. 72.

² See Pasquier's extremely interesting account of this, *Mémoires V*, p. 433 and following.

³ *Lettres de B. Constant à Mme. R.*, p. 320 and following. The original is in the Bibl. Nat. MSS., fr. 12454.

of his sentence : “ I know, Madame,” he says, “ that it is to your endeavours and to your persevering kindness that I owe it not to have fallen under the fatal knife; and I should be worthy of the torture the King has spared me if I did not preserve in my heart, as long as ever I live, the deepest gratitude to my benefactress.”¹

The Abbaye-aux-Bois then, in 1822 and 1823, was a kind of refuge for all those who had cause to dread the rigours of a severe Government. A little of Mme. de Staél had survived in Mme. Récamier’s soul, for, faithful to the education she had received from her friend, she only used her influence with Chateaubriand or La Rochefoucauld to protect the Liberals. She also developed her literary intercourse, thus preparing for the rôle she was to play during the last years of her life.

It was in this way that she encouraged Auguste Barbier, the future author of *Iambes et poèmes*. During his childhood he had often been taken to Mme. Récamier’s, and towards the end of his life he too, like Chateaubriand, recalled the garden of the house in the Rue d’Anjou-Saint-Honoré. Auguste Barbier had just completed his college studies when he met Juliette one evening at his father’s house. There were no strangers in the room, and Mme. Récamier asked the young law student about his plans, and gave him some friendly advice.²

It was also in 1822 that Lamartine saw her for the first time. He was passing through Paris on his way from Rome to London. He wanted to pay a visit to the Duchess of Devonshire, “ the most *Mæcenian* woman in Europe.”³ “ A woman I did not know was standing by her with her arm on the mantel-shelf, warming her little cold feet at the half burnt out embers in the fireplace.”⁴ “ I scarcely had time,” he adds, “ to see, as one sees the groups of stars in a dark sky, a white forehead, bay-coloured hair, a Grecian nose, eyes that had been dipped in the bluish dew of the soul, a mouth the flexible corners of which contracted slightly when she smiled, or expanded gravely with feeling ; cheeks that were neither

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 380. Compare Ballanche, *Biog. de Mme. R.*, p. 240 and following.

² Aug. Barbier, *Souvenirs personnels*, pp. 311–312.

³ *Cours familier de littérature*, IX, p. 13.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

tinted nor pale, but like velvet stirred by a constant shiver of autumn air.¹ Perfect harmony was the characteristic of this harmonious woman. She was wearing that day, and I have nearly always seen it since, a dress of grey silk falling in loose folds fastened with a black waistband, and mounting in modest tunic style to the neck."² Lamartine did not meet Mme. Récamier again until 1829, but according to his long and charming description of his visit to the Duchess of Devonshire, he remained under the spell of that first interview, "delighted, and attracted rather than in love."³

Prosper Mérimée was less easy to fascinate. In 1823 he was scarcely twenty years of age, as he was born in Paris in 1803. And this young man, "a pupil of Fauriel" and "a friend of Stendhal,"⁴ was already the dilettante, the ironist who in 1825 was to give the *Théâtre de Clara Gazul*, and in 1827 *La Guzla*. He was intimate with J. J. Ampère and Albert Stapfer.⁵ At Mme. Récamier's he met Victor Cousin, who was rather older than he was; and these two men who, later on, towards 1853, were to become rather intimate friends, did not care for each other at all at first.⁶ Prosper Mérimée criticized Juliette Récamier very severely when he was introduced to her by Ampère, either before or after *Clara Gazul*. He told his impressions later on to an Englishwoman, the daughter-in-law of William Senior, the critic. It is a curious page,⁷ and a singular contrast to Lamartine's enthusiastic description. "I did not know Mme. Récamier," says Mérimée, "until she was turned forty. It was easy to see that she had been pretty, but I do not fancy that she could ever have laid claim to beauty. She had a square figure, ugly feet and ugly hands; as to her intelligence, people only began to talk of that somewhat late, when all her other resources for charming were of no use. During her earlier years she had a fairly bad reputation, in her maturity and old age she set up for being a saint; but she was never either a Ninon de Lenclos nor a

¹ *Cours familier de littérature*, IX, p. 21.

² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴ Brunetière, *Manuel hist. litt.*, p. 438.

⁵ See Aug. Filon, *Mérimée et ses amis*, p. 11 and following, and p. 34.

⁶ M. Félix Chambon has edited the letters from Mérimée to Victor Cousin (an edition of 42 copies, which were not on sale). Compare Paul Bonnefon's article in the *Revue universelle Larousse* of March 9th, 1901.

⁷ See *Revue des Deux Mondes*, August 15th, 1879, p. 753 and following.



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Mme. de Maintenon. I fancy she was absolutely without the viscus called heart."

It is not difficult when one knows Mérimée, with his pretensions to cynicism, the horror he affected for so-called *bourgeois* habits, and with his dry and contemptuous egoism,¹ to understand the reasons for his antipathy to Juliette. Mme. Récamier had, according to Sainte-Beuve's pretty definition,² "a tender and compassionate sweetness." This attitude might at times appear to be a mere mannerism, as kindness had become a habit with her. But it is impossible to refuse her a heart, and Mérimée, who posed as a psychologist, must soon have been aware of this. In 1829 she had the post of secretary at the London Embassy offered to him.³ He refused it, and perhaps with reason. But if he had been better informed or more sincere, he would have recognized in Mme. Récamier deep feeling, which social life and the habit of social affinities had not abolished.

She proved this thoroughly when, at the close of 1823, difficulties separated her from Chateaubriand, whom she had loved passionately, and whom she still loved. We have scarcely anything about this crisis except the information published by Mme. Lenormant. "The eminent writer's disposition had not been able to hold out against that kind of intoxication which success, fame, and society are apt to bring with them to ardent and versatile imaginations. He was quite as attentive, and his friendship was no less warm, but Mme. Récamier no longer felt in it that shade of respectful reserve which belongs to the durable sentiments which were the only ones she cared to inspire.⁴ She suffered a great deal through this.⁵ Her niece in the meantime became seriously ill, and Mme. Recamier took advantage of this pretext, and as soon as Mlle. Cyvoct was convalescent decided on another journey to Italy, and left Paris on November 2nd, 1823.⁶

¹ See the fine portrait which Lanson gives of him. *Hist. de la litt. fr.*, pp. 996 and 997.

² *Causeries du Lundi*, I, pp. 135, 136, 137. About Mme. Récamier's kindness we can invoke Pariset's testimony. Letter of November 17th, 1821, published in the *Chronique médicale* of August 15th, 1897, p. 536.

³ *C.L.A.R.*, No. 84.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 32-33.

⁵ See *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 239 and following.

⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 34.

CHAPTER XVII

SECOND JOURNEY TO ITALY. STAY IN ROME

(NOVEMBER 2ND, 1823—JULY 1ST, 1824)

Causes of departure ; Mme. de C.—The journey ; stay in Florence ; a letter from Mme. d’Esmangard to the Comtesse d’Albany.—Arrival in Rome (December 15th) ; the Abbaye-aux-Bois reconstituted.—Victor Schnetz and Léopold Robert.—Etienne Delécluze.—Influence of the stay in Rome on Jean-Jacques Ampère.—Queen Hortense ; a fragment of Mme. Récamier’s *Mémoires* ; Mme. Salvage.—Death of the Duchess of Devonshire (March 30th, 1824).—Ballanche’s works and travels ; conception of the *Palingénésie*.—Mathieu de Montmorency’s letters.—Chateaubriand’s dismissal from the Ministry (June 6th).—Mme. de Récamier’s departure for Naples.

MME. RÉCAMIER therefore set out a second time for Italy, accompanied by Ballanche and Jean-Jacques Ampère.¹ On the 21st of November, 1823, the Duchesse de Broglie wrote to Barante : “ You know Mme. Récamier is in Rome for the sake of Amélie’s health ; it is supposed that she is charged with persuading Adrien to give up his post to M. de Blacas.”² As a matter of fact, there was nothing political about Mme. Récamier’s journey, and there can be no doubt as to the causes which provoked it. To be convinced of this we have only to read Chateaubriand’s letters, even in the form in which Mme. Lenormant has published them.³ On the 25th of October, on hearing of the project of departure, Chateaubriand wrote to Juliette as follows : “ Do not accuse me of what you do yourself. I love you with all my soul, and nothing will prevent my loving you, neither your resolution

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 230.

² *Souvenirs du baron de Barante*, III, p. 142.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 35 and following.

nor yet your injustice."¹ On the 28th of October there are fresh protestations. "You will find me on your return just as you have left me—that is, most tenderly and sincerely attached to you."² In his letter of November 2nd he complains that Juliette does not take into consideration his troubles, and five days later he alludes plainly to the reproaches he must have received from Mme. Récamier: "You will acknowledge that you were mistaken. . . . Believe me, nothing is changed, and you will own it some day. . . ."³

Mme. Récamier's letters to her dear Paul David give these indications precisely. From the Tour du Pin, on the 10th of November, she tells him: "I have not yet recovered from this great departure; I found a melancholy letter of complaint at Lyons, and I have not the courage to answer it."⁴ A few months later she was more explicit. On the 1st of May, 1824, she wrote as follows to Paul David:⁵ "If I were to return to Paris at present, I should find the agitations that made me leave; if M. de Chat were not nice to me it would be a great grief, and if he were nice I should have trouble such as I have resolved to avoid from henceforth. Here I find a diversion in art, and in religion a stay which will save me from all storms. It makes me sad to stay ten more months away from my friends, but it is better to make the sacrifice, and I confess to you that I feel it to be necessary. Believe me, my dear Paul, I shall never forget the good your friendship has done me in this strange circumstance."

The real reasons of this departure were soon known. Mme. Degérando, in a letter to Baronne Fritz de Dietrich, dated March 13th, 1824,⁶ expresses doubts about Mme. Récamier's "power" and her influence with Chateaubriand. "The truth," says Scherer,⁷ "is that Chateaubriand, very fickle all

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, p. 35.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴ *Lettres à Paul David*, No. 30 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁵ *Ibid.* No. 38. Compare *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 101-102.

⁶ *Lettres de Mme. Degérando*, p. 339.

⁷ *Études*, V, p. 104. Compare the Comte de Carné, *Correspondant*, December 25th, 1872, p. 1100. From Berlin, November 13th, 1824, Prince Augustus wrote to Mme. Récamier: ". . . the keen interest that I shall always have in all that concerns you . . . induces me to ask you for enlightenment. . . . There can be nothing sad for you except trouble as far as your affections are concerned." Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

his life, did not remain faithful to the woman who must have flattered herself on being his last inspiration. . . . It would even be easy to mention the rival, or rivals, whom he dared to give her. Mme. Récamier was wounded as much in her dignity as in her feelings. She wished to settle things radically, and consequently started for Italy.” Sainte-Beuve is more precise still. “There was,” he writes, “as a motive for Mme. Récamier’s departure in 1823, a little touch of jealousy with regard to a very pretty and very witty lady, Mme. de C. . . ., who was made much of just then at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.”¹

Mme. Récamier crossed the Alps in November. Chateaubriand continued to write to her,² and to protest against the abruptness of her departure, against her “injustice.” His letters are melancholy, charming too, and somewhat pathetic in their poetry. “I have become,” he says, “a coward about trouble. I am too old, and I have suffered too much. I am fighting in the most wretched way with sorrow for the few years that remain to me; the old shred of my life that is left to me is scarcely worth the care I am taking of it.”³ Juliette had no doubt sent him a rather stiff letter from Chambéry. “It gave me cruel pain,” he says in reply; “the Monsieur froze me.”⁴ She travelled slowly; they went by short journeys, “exploring the old buildings, the churches, museums, libraries.” Ballanche and Ampère discussed historical or philosophical questions.⁵ Madame Récamier stayed for fifteen days in Florence.

“Although she had a predilection for Rome,” says J. J. Ampère, “she loved the city of the Medicis. If Rome is the incomparable city, through the diversity and universality of the interests it offers to the traveller, Florence is the unrivalled city for perfection and taste. Fortunately for her, Florence ceased to produce at the time when taste changed in Italy; it stopped at the moment of exquisite beauty. Rome, on the contrary, has produced a great deal the last three centuries. Decadence, in all its audacity and, if we may say

¹ *Causeries du Lundi*, XIV, 317, note.

² *Souv. et Corr.* II, p. 37 and following. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 42. ⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 231; *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 243.

so, in all its grandeur, displays itself proudly. In Florence there is less than in Rome, but there is nothing that could be spared: Mme. Récamier felt keenly the very beautiful both in letters and in art; secondary merit did not affect her much. She only appreciated thoroughly the master-pieces, and consequently she enjoyed intensely the marvels collected together, almost without exception, in the Tribune or in the Pitti Palace. In Florence she liked, at the Uffizi, the grouping together of the works of sculpture and of the brush, in the same way as she was particularly fond of hearing beautiful music whilst looking at a fine picture, a species of delicate refinement of which one does not think generally and which thanks to her I have tried.”¹

Jean-Jacques was writing poetry. He composed a long piece on Florence,² in which he described his artistic promenades with Juliette :

“ Ah ! venez, et souffrez que mon bras vous soutienne,
Que parfois sur mon cœur je presse votre bras :
Laissez, laissez tomber votre main dans la mienne ;
Venez, sur ces hauteurs je veux guider vos pas.”

The French Minister in Tuscany at this time was M. de la Maisonsfort, one of Mathieu de Montmorency’s friends.³ He had for his Egeria Mme. d’Esmangard, whose ultra-Royalist opinions were well known, and who paid long visits to Florence. The old Comtesse d’Albany was ending her days in this city, and her destiny had more than one analogy with that of Mme. de Staél. She had married the Pretender, Charles Edward, Comte d’Albany. She had left him in order to live with Alfieri and, since the death of the poet, she had been living quietly in Florence with the painter François Fabre of Montpellier. She had had a noted *salon* there. Her most illustrious guests had been Sismondi, Consalvi, and the English poet Samuel Rogers, who had just published his poem on Italy. Chateaubriand had known her in Florence. He remembered her, and described her later on :

¹ J. J. Ampère, *Souvenirs de Mme. Récamier à Rome*. Unpublished. In the collection of M. Ch. de Loménie.

² See *Heures de poésie*, p. 61 and following.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 40.

“A heavy figure and expressionless face.”¹ Lamartine, who met her also, was more indulgent. “Her eyes,” he says,² “had a light in them, her ash-coloured hair a tint, her mouth a welcome, her face an intelligence and a grace of expression which made one remember if they no longer made one admire.” She died in 1824. “At all seasons, when the weather allowed, she went out in the morning, and in summer before seven o’clock. She walked in the direction of the Cascines, which at that hour were very lonely. She had no other woman with her, and no servant. Everyone knew her, with her invariable costume, her large hat and shawl, her resolute walk, which was somewhat heavy, and her hands frequently resting on her hips.”³

Mme. d’Albany announced Mme. Récamier’s visit to Mme. d’Esmangard, who answered her by a letter in which Juliette is judged rather unkindly.⁴

“At fifty,” writes Mme. d’Esmangard, “one can no longer be beautiful, in spite of what women of that age say, women who are unfortunate enough to have no other destiny than that of having been beautiful and of not knowing how to be anything else. Mme. Récamier is not quite in this case. She has around her in Paris a group of men of mark, thanks in the first place to the passion which M. de Montmorency had for her, but which changed into friendship when M. de Montmorency became devout, and in the second place to Mme. de Staél’s affection. The latter wanted a woman with her to hold the *second quality* circle together in her *salon*, whilst she attended to the first herself. She took Mme. Récamier at the time of her husband’s first bankruptcy (he has had another one since then), because Mme. Récamier, who was not witty, could not injure Mme. de Staél. On the death of the latter Mme. Récamier inherited part of her society. It has become the fashion to go to her house, because M. de Montmorency goes every evening and M. de Chat. Bri. once or twice a week. She does not talk much when with all these gentlemen. She is often in bed while they are talking,

¹ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 47.

² *Souvenirs et portraits*, I, p. 130.

³ Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, V, p. 437.

⁴ Letter communicated by M. Léon G. Pélissier (see *Le Portefeuille de la Comtesse d’Albany*).

or in her bedroom or the next room. Mme. Récamier's existence is one of the singularities of these times; she is a kind woman, according to what people say who know her best, and she had this reputation even when her husband's fortune and her face made her do some of those ridiculous things that the *parvenus* of the Revolution could not avoid doing. If she is a kind woman, as I believe from the general opinion, that is really the best thing, and we must take this into account to put against what she is short of in other ways."

Mme. Récamier's arrival in Rome was rather mournful. It was on the 15th of December.¹ The weather was cold and the sky grey. Ballanche was not well, and his travelling companions were more attentive to the details of his health, which was so precious to them, than to their near approach to the Eternal City. "When with Mme. Récamier," says J. J. Ampère, "we have to do as she does; the heart before anything else."² Mme. Swetchine, who also had her *salon* in Paris, was just then living in Rome. In her letter of December 16th, 1823, she announced the arrival of Mme. Récamier.³

Mme. Récamier once more met the Duc de Laval and the Duchess of Devonshire. She took a flat near the Place d'Espagne, in the Via Babuino, opposite the Greek Church.⁴ Ballanche and Mlle. Cyvoc were with her, and Jean-Jacques devoted most of his time to her. The Abbaye-aux-Bois was soon reconstituted in Italy. Dugas-Montbel, the Duc de Laval, M. de Givré, the Abbé Canova, Guérin, Léopold Robert, Schnetz, Delécluze visited Juliette and enlivened her voluntary exile.

Rome was no longer in the state in which Mme. Récamier had first known it. Pope Pius VII, the Pope of the Concordat and of the coronation, and the captive of Fontainebleau, had died in 1823. The austere Leo XII had suc-

¹ And not November. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 45.

² J. J. Ampère, *Souvenirs de Mme. R. à Rome*. Unpublished. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

³ *Nouvelles lettres de Mme. Swetchine*, published by the Marquis de la Grange, p. 59.

⁴ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 244; *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 45.

ceeded him. Mme. Récamier was present at his induction at St. John's, Lateran.¹ His proclamation had brought a considerable number of foreigners to Rome.² The Duc de Laval represented France, and was an old and tried friend of Mme. Récamier's. Guérin was at the head of the French Academy in Rome. Schnetz and Léopold Robert were working with him. Victor Schnetz was under forty at that time, and Léopold Robert was only thirty years of age. He had come to Italy to improve his talent, which had been formed by Gérard and David. Mme. Récamier was able to see him at work on his painting entitled *Paysanne de la campagne de Rome, assise et tenant un tambourin*. It was signed in 1824.³ Guérin, Schnetz, and Robert were often at Mme. Récamier's.⁴ Robert appeared to be shy and was very quiet. He was an intimate friend of Schnetz. Towards 1821⁵ he had executed his first picture, so to speak. It was at first called *Corinne improvisant au cap Misène*, and it then became *L'Improvisateur napolitain*. In 1822 he had organized a kind of exhibition in honour of the King of Prussia, who was passing through Rome. He was just beginning to be known. He did not much care for society, particularly that of women. "Women," he wrote to a friend,⁶ "always miss their vocation when they want to give up their housekeeping, their needle, and their spindle." Mme. Récamier, therefore, had all the more merit in overcoming his distrust. Later on, in 1835, Léopold Robert committed suicide in consequence of an unfortunate attachment for the Princesse Charlotte Bonaparte and under the influence of the deep melancholy to which he was subject.⁷

It was also at Rome, during this second visit there, that Mme. Récamier met Étienne Delécluze, who was both an artist and an art critic. Later on he gave her a large place in his *Souvenirs de soixante années*.⁸ Delécluze was a great

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 46.

² In 1823 Coulmann was in Rome. See the second volume of his *Reminiscences*.

³ See *Musée du Louvre, Éc. franç., Catal. Villot*, p. 42 of the *Supplément*.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 48.

⁵ See Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, X, two articles on Léopold Robert.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 445.

⁶ Quoted by Sainte-Beuve, p. 419.
⁸ 1862, in-18.

friend of Jean-Jacques Ampère's.¹ He often went for excursions in the neighbourhood of Rome with him and with Montbel and Desmousseaux de Givré. M. de Givré had been an Attaché at the French Embassy in London under Chateaubriand in 1822.² He knew Mme. Récamier well, and introduced Delécluze to her. Mme. Récamier kept up her custom of wearing, indoors, a white dress with a pale blue sash.³ Delécluze thought her still very beautiful. He tells us, in that pretentious language for which Sainte-Beuve blames him so severely,⁴ that in 1824,⁵ at Rome, she still made many men wretched. He gives us a picture, which appears to be fairly exact, of the little group of nine or ten persons who scarcely left Mme. Récamier. The Duc de Laval enlivened these soirées with his *grand seigneur* manners, his scepticism which bordered on frivolity, his kindness, ease, and grace. Ballanche, much heavier, his "battered" face looked preoccupied with his works, with his *Palingénésie*, which he had undertaken at this epoch; he seemed to be "vegetating rather than living,"⁶ except when he was excited by any contradiction. Usually he remained motionless by the chimney-piece, "like a sphinx." Lord Kinnaird and the Duc Abbé de Rohan sometimes came in and joined in the conversation. Politics were very much discussed, and the question was argued very warmly as to whether Benjamin Constant had the right or not to be a member of the Chamber of Deputies. Dugas-Montbel, in spite of his gentle disposition, voted strongly for the Liberals. J. J. Ampère, "younger still than his age,"⁷ "as fickle as April,"⁸ proved himself "the most literary man in French society in Rome at that moment." He read a tragedy,⁹ *Les Lombards*, at Mme. Récamier's and, one day in the country, he confided to Étienne (Delécluze) the idea for a comedy, the title of which, *Le Noble et le Riche, ou le mariage par intérêt*, indicates the subject.¹⁰ Ampère was hesitating between the

¹ *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 185.

² See *M.O.T.*, V, p. 179, M. Biré's note.

³ *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 186.

⁴ *Nouveaux Lundis*, III, p. 120 and following.

⁵ *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 189.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 190. ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 196. ⁹ *Ibid.* ¹⁰ *Ibid.*

classics and romantics, and he confided to Delécluze all his scruples.

Jean-Jacques wrote regularly to his father his impressions about Rome.¹ His *Rosemonde* had finally been accepted.² His stay in Italy strengthened his literary vocation. "He saw himself there initiated every day into the highest and most refined society, received on equal terms with those bearing the first names, and favoured by the most flattering intercourse. As he became more and more penetrated by the easy tone of supreme courtesy, he took his first indelible impression of serious affection for Rome, for that home for wounded souls who were in love with the sole grandeurs of art and history, and devoted to all the religions of the past."³ At the very time when he was hovering round Mme. Récamier he was beloved in Paris. Mlle. Clémentine Cuvier, whom he had delighted by the charm of his conversation, was awaiting his return with discreet impatience.⁴ But he was entirely at the service of the Lady of the Abbaye; he had constituted himself her knight-in-waiting, and he accompanied her everywhere.

Mme. Récamier continued in Rome the way of living which reminded her of Paris. She scarcely went out at all. She was nevertheless present, during Carnival, at an entertainment organized at the Venetian Palace by the Austrian Ambassador, the Comtesse Appony.⁵ The *Nouveau Pourceaugnac*, by Scribe, was given.⁶ Mlle. Cyvoct had accepted a rôle, and she played her part "to perfection, with a charming grace and a shade of timidity"⁷ which won her the approval of everyone.

Towards the end of February, 1824, Queen Hortense arrived in Rome with her two sons, Napoleon and Louis-Napoleon. Mme. Récamier had not seen her since the Hundred Days.⁸ Her intimacy with the Duc de Laval made it rather em-

¹ See specially *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 250 and 256.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 245-246.

³ Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 195.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁵ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 67 and following.

⁶ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 259 and 260.

⁷ Letter from Mme. R. to Paul David, *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 68.

⁸ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 71.

barrassing for her to receive in her own home a dethroned Queen. The two friends decided to see each other elsewhere. They went for some excursions together, meeting *by chance*,¹ and went for some mysterious promenades to the Coliseum. Prince Charles-Napoleon Bonaparte and Jean-Jacques Ampère talked together while waiting for the conversations of the ladies to come to an end. Queen Hortense, whom Mme. Récamier believed "to have been in the secret of the return from Elba," justified herself with regard to this reproach. She told how, after receiving from Louis XVIII the title of Duchesse de Saint-Leu, she had given up all idea of conspiring against royalty, how she had experienced "more grief than joy" when the Emperor had landed, and how she had written then to the King to "disown any participation in these events." She told Mme. Récamier about her interview with the Emperor, the reproaches she had received, his anger, and the touching scene which had interrupted their conversation when the Emperor, on approaching the window, had been recognized and acclaimed by the crowd; and how this had caused the newspapers to say, the following day, that the Emperor had presented Queen Hortense to the people.

Mme. Récamier, who tells us rather cleverly this account, admitted it as true. From this day the mysterious promenades with Queen Hortense became more frequent. The Queen even asked Juliette to meet her at the Torlonia ball. It was a masked ball, and the two friends went dressed in a similar costume. The Queen walked about escorted by the Ambassador of Louis XVIII. The Princesse de Lieven was the only person who found this a poor joke, so true was it, as Mme. Récamier said, that "politics never left her, even at a ball."² The Queen was considerate about Juliette's royalistic and liberal opinions.³ This intimacy increased after the death of Eugène Beauharnais. After the fall of the Empire he had withdrawn, with the title of Duc de Leuchtenberg, and was living with his father-in-law, the King of Bavaria. He died in 1824, at Munich, of apoplexy.

¹ See the fragment of *Mémoires de Mme. R. (Souv. et Corr., II, p. 72 and following).*

² Work quoted, p. 82.

³ *Ibid.*

For a long time he had been friendly with Mme. Récamier. She still remembered the day when he had taken one of her rings and refused to give it her back.¹ "The Queen loved her brother dearly,"² and Mme. Récamier, without "taking any notice of party interests or of opinion," now called on Queen Hortense, who was deeply grateful to her for this. When Hortense de Beauharnais died, in 1837, she bequeathed to Juliette the lace veil that she was wearing when she met her at St. Peter's, Rome.³

Prince Charles Napoleon, the Queen's eldest son, told his plans to Mme. Récamier's friends, Ballanche and Ampère. He wanted at that time to fight in the ranks of the Philhellenists. Prince Louis, who was very young, was rarely one of the party.⁴ It was Mme. Récamier who introduced to Queen Hortense Mme. Salvage de Faverolles, daughter of the French Consul at Civita-Vecchia,⁵ an enthusiastic Royalist and intelligent woman, but with a somewhat trying disposition. Mme. Salvage was converted by Queen Hortense; she became attached to her, and from thenceforth never left her. Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier met her again with the Duchesse de Saint-Leu at Arenenberg.⁶

Cardinal Consalvi died on the 24th of January, 1824, only a few months after Pius VII. Chateaubriand's phrase in his *Mémoires* with reference to him will be remembered:⁷ "Cardinal Consalvi, supple and firm, whose resistance was gentle and polite, was the incarnation of old Roman politics, minus the faith of the times and plus the tolerance of the century."⁸ Mme. Récamier, who never saw him except on his bed of state,⁹ did her utmost after his death to console the Duchess of Devonshire, the Cardinal's faithful friend. Elizabeth Hervey, Duchess of Devonshire, was the second wife of William Cavendish.¹⁰ After the death of her husband

¹ See *C.L.A.R.*, No. 10.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 83.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de la jeunesse*, pp. 233-234.

⁵ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 103 and following.

⁶ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 586.

⁷ II, p. 346.

⁸ See E. Daudet, *Le Cardinal Consalvi*, Paris, 1866.

⁹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 54.

¹⁰ She must not be confounded with the first Duchess of Devonshire, Georgina Spencer, the friend of Fox and of Delille.

she settled in Rome, where she patronized the arts and kept up her intercourse with her numerous French friends. Mme. Récamier had known the first Duchess of Devonshire during her visit to London in 1802.¹ She knew the second Duchess too, and there was said to be more than one point of resemblance between the latter and herself. "She is the most affable of all the women who command by gentleness," the Duc de Laval said to Juliette in one of his letters about her, "and she is always obeyed. As she did in London when she was young, so she is doing here now. She has all Rome at her service ; ministers, cardinals, painters, sculptors, society, everyone is at her feet."² Very much affected by the death of Cardinal Consalvi, the Duchess did not recover from the shock. She died on the 30th March, 1824. Mme. Récamier was not allowed to see her until a few hours before her death. She had a very painful impression of this end. It was made still more sad by family complications which, to all appearances at any rate, were somewhat mysterious.³

Ballanche worked a great deal in Italy. He had planned to write with Ampère a *Travellers' Guide* which was "to answer to all requirements and all curiosities."⁴ The Guide was never written, but it was in Rome that Ballanche "had a clear perception of the antique Latin city, of the patrician law, and of that uncertain epoch of which he tried in the *Formule générale* to reconquer the sense with regard to Titus Livius. His plans of work widened out and became established, so that by their imposing structure they seemed to take something of those grand Roman lines of the buildings and horizons."⁵ It was then that he arranged the plan of the *Palingénésie* and of the three poems which were to compose it : *Orphée*, a sort of prehistoric epopee ; the *Formule générale*, an epopee both symbolical and historical ; the *Ville des Expiations*, with the episode of the *Vision d'Hébal*, a prophetic epopee.

Dugas-Montbel, who was spending a few weeks in Italy,

¹ Compare *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 393.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 51.

³ See *Ibid.*, p. 94 and following.

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 231 and 232.

⁵ Sainte-Beuve (*Portr. cont.*), II, p. 38.

took Ballanche with him to Naples. The two friends left Mme. Récamier on the 22nd of January, 1824.¹ It was scarcely a favourable season for this expedition, neither was it for a journey to Sicily. "Great Greece," and in that he included Sicily, attracted the writer of *Antigone* more than any other place. The philosophical and poetical souvenirs evoked by this country were closely allied with his ideas. He would like to have gone there, not in search of inspirations, for the natural working of his mind led him to proceed by divination, but for a confirmation of his ideas. He would have liked to know whether he had divined rightly.²

A visit to Pompeii could not fail to strike his imagination.

"Yesterday we made our expedition to Pompeii," he writes to Mme. Récamier on the 29th of January.³ "The weather was all that could be desired. We spent nearly three hours in this city, which Vesuvius has destroyed and preserved, just as in the natural history cases the stuffed birds are preserved. . . . The ruins of Pompeii, in the midst of this solitude, are quite different from the ruins of Rome. It is private life that has left the most monuments here. People lived in a very small way. The temples are nothing but kinds of chapels. There is nothing at all vast except the theatres. Can you imagine the despair of the inhabitants of this unfortunate city, surprised on one side by the lava, and on the other by the tempest, for the sea itself must have refused them a refuge? Our poor human species, to what calamities it is subject!"

But Ballanche very soon left his philosophical reflections, and returned, in thought at least, to the midst of the French colony he had left in Rome.

"I cannot have any news from you until the day after to-morrow, Thursday," he adds in the same letter, "and until then I shall have to invent it for myself. Just now I shall say: It is one o'clock; the carriage is waiting at the house door in the Via Babuino No. 65. Then I shall say: It is five o'clock; they will be sitting down to table. It is evening,

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 63.

² See *Ibid.*, pp. 64 and 65.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Addressed to Mme. Récamier, Via Babuino 65, Rome. The post-mark is 29 Gennaio.

and they are either at the Argentine or at Valle, or they are talking, as in Paris, either in your room or the *salon*. There is no longer to be any question of entail; that is a thing obtained. We have to compose the Chamber of Peers with the only great people in the country. For this institution we must have a good strong foundation, supported by privileged territories, posts of independent magistracy, and ecclesiastical sees. Industry without any limitations gives too much advantage to the democratic element; industry must be put under the guardianship of wardens and companies, etc. All these questions will be discussed and decided without us. Such great interests will not prevent you from studying poetry and literature. *L'Ecole des vieillards* and *Rosemonde* will claim in turn a share in the discussions. Then art, the ruins, the churches. The poor absent ones will be talked about too. What are they doing? Are they here? Are they there? Will they soon come back? Will they go for the *Great Greece expedition?*"

Montbel and Ballanche postponed this last journey. The one was in a hurry to return to France, the other wanted to get back to Rome.¹ They visited Baïes. "We wandered about," says Ballanche, "among those ruins, those poetical landscapes, those tranquil waters, those mortal lakes, those lands where one feels the abyss under one's feet, those souvenirs of grandeurs, calamities, crimes, pleasures, glories, pageantries, sorrows, those sites, the outlines of which are so graceful, the lines so charming and the aspects so sad."² The country would have been full of charm to the poet-philosopher, but that he felt himself in exile. In the midst of his expeditions he was sad when he was long without news. He was always dreading "annoying" letters from Paris for his friend.³ Ballanche had his own particular way of travelling. He observed Nature as a metaphysician who gives out his ideas about the exterior world, but he only considered the scenery through which he passed as an excitant for his imagination,

¹ See in *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 65, Ballanche's interesting ideas about Greece.

² Fragment of a letter, dated merely Thursday evening, and addressed to Mme. Récamier, Rome. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

³ Letter of February 5th.

and as staging in the midst of which his philosophical thoughts might be encouraged.¹

At other times it is to Mlle. Cyvoct that he writes, and he appears then to let himself go more.

"We had already heard of Cardinal Consalvi's death," he says to her; "this news dismayed us. He was beginning to take up affairs once more, and that was his life. The Duchess of Devonshire was very fortunate in having near her a person who was so true a friend and who, besides, had the gift of consoling, because she has received in so high a degree the gift of sympathy."

"Our young poet will make his way in the world. He will in the end come to love the place and the instruments of his success. He will understand that he has fellow-creatures, and that will be a good thing, even for his talent. I am very anxious that it should be thus, and that he should have to dispute about his private opinions. . . ."

"Honours are turning M. de Chateaubriand's head. I read just recently an article in the *Journal des Débats* which I believe was by him. I should have thought he would have had the good taste to leave off irony in his prosperity, and it is that which makes me doubt his complete prosperity. He has been carried off out of his sphere. He sees now that in the end a peerage will be constituted of which he will not be a natural element. A veritable peerage should be composed of persons who have no need to take out their letters. I know very well that M. de Chateaubriand will remain in it by concession, just as there are Senators who have remained in the present Chamber of Peers."²

What was becoming of Chateaubriand? This was the question that was being asked in Rome, the question which in spite of everything was troubling Juliette and the little circle of familiar friends. From Paris, Mathieu de Mont-

¹ See in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 65, the curious fragment of a letter in which he analyses this conception: "I look without making any effort to look, without trying to realize what I see. The impressions I receive blend with the sentiments that I already have, with the thoughts that are within me." This fragment is to be found, too, in J. J. Ampère's *Ballanche*, p. 123.

² Unpublished letters from Ballanche to various people, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

morency continued to inform Mme. Récamier of political events. Juliette asked him, too, to let her have information about the movements of her friends.

" You have friends," wrote Mathieu on the 13th of December,¹ " who are so much mixed up in great adventures that it is not so easy for me to follow them, and still less easy to tell you about everything by letter. The first one, to whom, as you know, I do not give precedence, seems to me to be always on the same terms with his predominant *confrère*. He would often prefer that it were not thus, but more frequently he resigns himself to it as being the surer way, and the usual remarks on one side and the other are that they are mutually satisfied. You are perhaps a little perplexed, and Adrien much more so, by these late changes in the Spanish Ministry. I refer you to your Ambassador friend for all that he can tell you about this. It would be rather curious to know what your Minister friend tells you of it, if he should tell you anything at all. He and his colleagues may decide to make the best of it as an accomplished thing ; but I am sure that the first impression was regret at not having had more direct influence and a trifle of displeasure and disdain for a very imperfect thing. . . ."

The news had spread in Paris with regard to the real motives which had induced Juliette's journey to Italy, for on the 23rd of December Mathieu writes to her as follows :²

" I do not like your continual cough, and although you are attending much more to Amélie's, I hope that you will both of you benefit by the fine climate to which you had recourse through a quite maternal sentiment. For I know some good people who refuse to attribute your journey to any other cause, in spite of the contrary opinion of many persons and even friends. You will be always and everywhere exposed to the inconvenience which the too attentive assiduity of the Minister made you feel at the close of the visit to Florence. Why do people find such fascination with you ? "

Mathieu de Montmorency and Chateaubriand had not given

¹ Letters some parts of which have been published. No. 144 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Compare *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 43 and 44. Mme. Lenormant has modified the text of the original.

² Unpublished letter, No. 146 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

up seeing each other. When they both received the Order of Saint-André they exchanged courtesies, to the great annoyance of Villèle. Mathieu even communicated to Chateaubriand the letters he received from Rome.¹

Unfortunately, Mathieu's letters to Mme. Récamier are intentionally somewhat obscure. He says, for instance, when he invites his friend to come back:² "Are you very much pressed to return by another correspondent? Or does quite a strange silence reign? I cannot tell you anything very positive or very new about René and Laure. With the former there is always the same condescension followed by an inclination to irritation and rivalry. He complains about the sentiments of several of his correspondents, especially with regard to Madrid, but he is very well satisfied with the London one."³

When he heard that Mme. Récamier was lengthening her stay in Italy, Mathieu was distressed, and complained about it. "I must confess," he says, "that I was struck by such a plan as by a thunderbolt. I cannot help coming back to the idea, which I have all the time tried to set aside, that there is another reason for not wanting to be in Paris than the one I thought was the real one."⁴ Chateaubriand himself had not ceased writing to Rome, and Mme. Récamier continued to send him at any rate "little notes."⁵ He excused himself on the ground of affairs for not writing regularly.⁶ Juliette then reproached him with his "forgetfulness," congratulating him at the same time on his "triumphs." He protested against these two words. "Do not write me such short, dry notes," he said to her, "and remember that you hurt me unjustly. It is double suffering to have to endure injury that one has not deserved. Yours, and yours ever."⁷

¹ Letter No. 147 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 59 and following.

² Unpublished letter of February 7th, 1824, No. 149 of the collection.

³ See other letters from M. de Montmorency in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 69 and following, p. 85 and following, p. 90 and following, p. 99 and following, p. 115.

⁴ Unpublished letter of May 22nd, 1824, No. 157 of the collection. See another letter of June 8th, in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 107 and following.

⁵ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 44.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁷ Letter of January 28th, 1824. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 62-63.

In March, Mathieu de Montmorency told him that Juliette would start towards the end of May. He at once sent to Rome the assurance of his joy and of his constancy. At that time he was still full of confidence in his political success.¹ Short though this correspondence is, and regrettable as regards the absence of Mme. Récamier's letters, it is evident that she suffered more than Chateaubriand through this separation. It is she who complains, who would have liked more details, and perhaps less vague assurances of affection. It is he who now replies by one letter to two letters from his friend.² We can realize Mme. Récamier's sentiments by reading this letter which she sends on the 20th of March to the confidant of her unhappy days, Paul David :³

" You will perhaps be sorry to see from Amélie's letter that we think of prolonging our stay in Italy until the end of the summer. Amélie has enjoyed herself very much this winter. Her health is at last good, although still delicate. After all the diversions of travelling, the Abbaye might seem very dull this summer. I am also afraid of agitations again there which would be odious to me. I receive pleasant letters ; my absence is complained of, and I am begged to return ; but one can never live with a person who is not truthful, and I am absolutely determined not to risk all those agitations again. Time is needed in order to change the terms of our intercourse, and from that point of view my longer stay here can only be favourable."

It is evident that at this moment Mme. Récamier was quite undeceived with regard to Chateaubriand. She judged him with severity that was all the more grave from the fact that it was expressed so simply. M. Récamier had just met with fresh reverses of fortune. Juliette was now accustomed to accidents of this kind. She had not even the strength to complain about it.⁴ She mentioned it nevertheless to Chateau-

¹ Letter of March 16th, *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 89 and 90.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 92. The letter of April 3rd is in answer to the two of March 13th and 20th.

³ Letters to Paul David, No. 36 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Unpublished. Compare her letter of May 1st to Paul David. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 101 and 102.

⁴ According to the letter of March 17th to Paul David [1824], No. 39 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

briand, who, entirely taken up with himself and his successes, was endeavouring in vain to conceal his pride under an appearance of modesty.¹ "The glory and the happiness of my country," he wrote, "date from my entry into the Ministry."² He was reckoning on a peaceable session, on an easy victory in spite of the power of the Left.

These hopes were roughly deceived. On the 6th of June 1824, at Whitsuntide, Chateaubriand, on going to the Pavillon de Marsan to present his respects to Monsieur, received from his secretary, Hyacinthe Pilorge, a letter from Villelè and the royal edict "replacing" the "Sieur Vicomte de Chateaubriand." Two hours later he had moved his goods and chattels, together with his two cats, away from the Ministry.³

"When Chateaubriand was dismissed from the Ministry," writes Sainte-Beuve, "in that violent and decisive crisis which broke in two his life as a Royalist, his letters to Mme. Récamier are missing and are a great loss. They are not to be found with the other papers, we are told ; they must have contained such bursts of anger and avenging hatred that they had long been suppressed."⁴ It seems, though, that Mme. Récamier did not hear of Chateaubriand's disgrace until she was in Naples, where she had decided to go towards the end of June, 1824.

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 92.

² *Ibid.*

³ G. Lanson, *La Défection de Chateaubriand*, *Revue de Paris*, August 1st, 1901, p. 488. Compare Géraud, *Un homme de lettres sous l'Empire et la Restauration*, p. 233.

⁴ *Causeries du Lundi*, XIV, p. 318.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE VISIT TO NAPLES
(JULY 1824—JUNE 1825.)

Naples (July 1st, 1824).—J. J. Ampère's poetry; he leaves for Paris (November, 1824); he renounces his hopes.—Chateaubriand's opposition; interruption of the correspondence with Mme. Récamier.—Charles Lenormant.—Return to Rome (December, 1824).—Louis I of Bavaria.—Mme. Swetchine.—Pietro Tenerani.—Ballanche in Tuscany.—Letter from Chateaubriand (February 9th, 1825).—J. J. Ampère in Paris.—Mme. Récamier leaves Rome (April 20th, 1825); return to Paris (end of May).—Mlle. Cyvoct engaged to Charles Lenormant.

MME. RÉCAMIER settled for a time at Naples, on the 1st of July, 1824, with her niece, Ballanche, and J. J. Ampère.¹ The little group had travelled with an escort of eighty Austrians. They had gone by moonlight in order to avoid the heat and the dangers of the Pontins marshes, which were said to be specially pernicious at sunset. The joy of the travellers was great to find in their new resting-place admirable sunshine and beautiful skies. J. Jacques more than any of the others was in ecstasies. “I have never had such health and physical enjoyment,” he wrote to his father. “I do not think there can be anything more delicious in any place in the world.” He was counting on working hard at his new tragedy of *Rachel*, which was to be a younger sister of *Rosemonde*.²

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 124. Adrien de Montmorency was leaving for Paris. His letter of June 10th to Mme. Récamier ends with these words: “Kind regards to the poet, to the philosopher, and to the little Liberal.” M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

² *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 270 and following. See Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 195.

Juliette was entertained by a rich French family named Lefebvre, who offered her the most luxurious hospitality. This was at Chiaja, and from the house the island of Capri could be seen. But, living in the past, anxious and scarcely able to sleep at all, Mme. Récamier was thinking all the time of the friend she had left and of the woman friend she had lost. When she went out with the others on the sea she would read over again the *Martyrs*, and at Cape Misène she would have the improvisation repeated to her in which Mme. de Stael, in place of exact observation, had put all her imagination. She wrote to Mme. Murat—that is, to the Comtesse Lipona—who was living at Trieste in a wretchedly poor way. She visited the suburbs of Naples with her companions, but she was more interested in all the rumours that arrived from Paris, where the death of Louis XVIII, on the 16th of September, was to plunge Chateaubriand into fresh agitations.¹

J. J. Ampère on his side was experiencing a certain amount of anxiety. André-Marie had just been appointed Professor of Experimental Physics at the College of France, but the delight he had felt at this appointment had been followed by several disappointments. He was now greatly distressed at having to neglect his researches in dynamic electricity. His business affairs, too, were in a bad way. He owned that he owed four thousand francs, and in order to be cheered up, and also to arrange about his money matters, he wanted his son to return. J. J. Ampère was therefore obliged to think of leaving Italy. We need not pity him too much, for he had written to Sautelet that he no longer had for Mme. Récamier any other feeling “than a tenderness, the limits of which he foresaw,”² and on the strength of this declaration his friend, who had heard Delécluze describe the long evenings of the Via Babuino, advised him to start, and begged him to return to prose. Seized with remorse at the thought of his father’s trouble, and vaguely inclined towards religion, Ampère decided to

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 138 and following. *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 234.

² See Sautelet’s reply on the 3rd of November, 1824, *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 279.

go back to Paris, and Mme. Récamier was the first to encourage him in this resolve.¹

Whilst in Naples Jean-Jacques had been working. In the first place, he had put into verse the account of those excursions with the woman about whom he thought himself tormented. It was to all this that he owed the pieces which later on figured in his *Heures de poésie*; *Promenades sur la mer*; *Course au Vésuve*; *Voyage aux enfers de Virgile*; *Poestum*.² The first of these pieces is perhaps the most curious one. After a fatiguing day of heat, at the hour when the night begins to get cool, the poet embarks on the classic barque. He glides "over the billows" to the sound of the waves lashed by the breeze. Everyone knows the scene; nothing is wanting, neither "the humid plane," nor the "bright stars," nor even, alas! the sirens. But all at once Jean-Jacques remembers that he is romantic. The poem, which began by enchantment, ends with a curse and also with a confession :

Non, je ne sentais rien de tout ce que j'ai dit :
 Tandis qu'à rimailler ma muse ainsi s'obstine,
 Chantant Baïa d'après Tibulle ou Lamartine,
 Mon cœur, fort peu touché de la lune et du ciel,
 Se débat obsédé par un tourment réel.
 Car celle qui pour moi prête sa grâce aux choses,
 Donne aux cieux leurs rayons et leur parfum aux roses,
 Avec qui je voudrais, sur les flots emporté,
 Me perdre dans la nuit et dans l'immensité,
 D'un cercle brillant entourée,
 Et sans songer à moi, dont l'âme est torturée,
 Écoute indolemment les compliments sans fin
 Et les fades propos et les récits vulgaires,
 Et les interminables guerres
 D'un général napolitain.³

The somewhat puerile imagination of Jean-Jacques liked these light contrasts. Another time he climbs Vesuvius to

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, from p. 273 to p. 283. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 148.

² *Heures de poésie*, 1863 edition, p. 70 and following.

³ General Charles Filangieri, son of the celebrated publicist. Benjamin Constant had annotated the *Science de la Législation*, 1821, 6 vols. in-8. The General was now out of favour, and Mme. Récamier, according to her niece, very much appreciated the Liberalism of this patriot. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 147.

see a sunrise over Naples. Six boatmen row him "over the sombre sea, so immense and profound," and leave him at the foot of the volcano. When he arrives at the top his guide suddenly tells him "in a quick, agitated whisper" that the neighbouring mountain is inhabited by brigands, and that these brigands kill the travellers who come there. This is quite enough to make the young poet at once feel

"An overpowering terror
Accompanied by secret pleasure."

The same process of composition and, if the expression is not too hard, the same process of inspiration are to be found in the *Voyage aux enfers de Virgile*, which is merely a somewhat insipid commentary of the sixth book of the *Aeneid*, and in the elegy of *Poestum*, a tearful meditation on the hackneyed theme of human frailty.

It was at Naples, and when with Mme. Récamier, that J. J. Ampère translated Aristotle and tried to put into French three episodes of *Roland furieux*. He made one single poem of it, the one entitled *Angélique et Roland*, and he was very proud to have written it in verse of ten feet.¹ To these compositions must be added the short piece *Childe-Harold à Inez*.² Jean-Jacques has described himself in this, mourning over an ill that it was impossible to remedy, an ill that was neither love, nor hatred, nor ambition, but the weariness, the sadness, the anguish of not being able to escape his own thoughts; and this too, even in 1824, was nothing very new. In all these sorrows and in all this anguish the mind had a greater share than the heart.

Jean-Jacques left at the beginning of November. The separation did not take place without a storm,³ but at the last minute all was calm, and the young man went away, taking with him a ring which, on his way, he looked at more than once with tears in his eyes. From Terracine he wrote two melancholy letters full of regret.⁴ The same spirit is to be found in these as in the poems, but the letters are more natural. "I sat down," wrote Jean-Jacques, "by a deserted

¹ *Heures de poésie*, 1863 edition, p. 90 and following.

² *Ibid.*, p. 253 and following.

³ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 283.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 284 and following.

chapel, and I thought of you in that wild place, which reminded me of the Agnano Lake, where we were only two days ago. I could be there again in two hours, and very soon I shall be four hundred leagues away." After having advised his departure,¹ it caused her pain, and she blamed him, and even went as far as thinking it all absurd.² When Ampère had bidden her farewell, her emotion, very natural after so long a time of cordial friendship, caused her to write him the following words : "I am writing to you while you are still here, but I want you to find this little note on arriving in Rome. To-morrow you will be gone, and I shall be sadder and lonelier than ever. Adieu, adieu. You will write every day, and I promise you a line by every post until my return."³

These were promises made during the emotion of leave-taking. Jean-Jacques wrote very often from Rome, where he never thought without sadness of the brilliant promenades to the Villa Pamphili,⁴ from Padoua, too, and particularly from Venice, where he was glad to arrive by moonlight on a cold night, when Nature seemed to be in the same kind of mourning as he was.⁵ It was in this city, in the midst of scenery which harmonized with his sadness, very much disappointed at receiving no letter from his friend, bewildered by a solitude to which he was not accustomed, that Ampère composed his elegy entitled *Venise*.⁶ The sentiment in it is more sincere than that of his former poems. Venice appears to him as a symbol of suffering and of death, and it is not difficult to see how these evocations blend with the recital of his own griefs, but this time there is a certain charm in the idea and a sweetness in the poetry. Jean-Jacques in his "dark gondola"⁷ really has a heavy heart. He feels that there is no hope of being loved, and that he must resign himself to the most tender of friendships. He owns that Juliette has never given him any hope of anything else, as he writes :

"If fate had willed it, if you had loved me!"⁸

¹ J. J. Ampère says so distinctly in a letter, *Corr. des Ampère*, p. 282.

² *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 236.

³ Unpublished letter, from a copy in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 286.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

⁶ *Heures de poésie*, 1863 edition, p. 124 and following.

⁷ P. 131.

⁸ Verse 10 of the elegy.

Mme. Récamier's replies to Ampère's letters are tender, but it is a tenderness that is almost maternal and, so to speak, rather superficial. "I received your letters from Ferrara and from Venice," she writes on the 26th of November, "and I was very much touched by them. I also had a letter from M. de l'Ecluse; he is worrying about your absence. What an excellent man he is! Give him all kinds of messages from me. I was forgetting to tell you that I have been ill all the time, and that I only got up for the journey. The little drawing has come; it is charming, delightful. When shall you see it in the little cell at the Abbaye? Adieu, adieu!"¹

J. J. Ampère was back in Paris in the beginning of December. Mme. Récamier was by that time once more in Rome. She had spent about five months in Naples.

It was on arriving at Naples that Mme. Récamier must have heard of Chateaubriand's discharge. Adrien de Montmorency had been informed of it on the 19th of June, when passing through Geneva.² Mathieu had voted against the law, the rejection of which had caused this event. As soon as he arrived in Paris, the Ambassador went to pay a visit of politeness to his fallen chief. He considered that René had "done himself great harm by his unheard-of burst of vengeance."³ Chateaubriand had succumbed to the hostility of Monsieur, also to the ill-will of Villèle, who had asked for the decree of dismissal.⁴ The *Débats* at once "opened fire on the Ministry, and with this paper the loyal *Quotidienne*, too, which its editor, Michaud, maintained tenaciously on Chateaubriand's lines."⁵ He himself brought together against the Ministry the Ultras and the Liberals of the Chamber, made a campaign among the peers, took up once more his journalistic pen and, on the 22nd of June, published

¹ Unpublished letter, from a copy in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. See three other letters from M. Récamier to Ampère in *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, pp. 235, 236, 237.

² See his letter, *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 109 and following, and that of July 5th, *ibid.*, p. 116 and following.

³ Letter of July 19th, *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 118 and following. Adrien de Montmorency left Paris at the end of October, 1824, to return to Rome. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 150.

⁴ See Lanson, *La Défection de Chateaubriand*, p. 493.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 494.

in the *Débats* his first article, the beginning of "a series which continued until December 19th, 1826, fiery but admirable articles, which won the enthusiastic approval of Sébastiani, Benjamin Constant, La Fayette and even of the *Constitutionnel*, and did Villèle great harm in the country."¹ The death of the King and the change of sovereigns led him to write the pamphlet entitled *Le Roi est mort, vive le Roi*. But Charles X maintained Villèle in power, and Chateaubriand continued the war. "There was not a project, not an act, not an abstention even, or any inaction of M. de Villèle, in which he did not denounce some notorious maliciousness or incapacity and the infallible ruin of France if the Ministry should continue as it was."²

A decree of August 4th had given the Foreign Affairs to Baron de Damas and the King's Household to the Duc de Doudeauville under the orders of Villèle, who kept, together with the Finances, the Presidency of the Council. The Duc de Doudeauville kept up a correspondence with Mme. Récamier. Ambroise de la Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville was about sixty years of age at this time. He was a modest and kindly-disposed man. Mme. Récamier had known him for a long time, and had always received his son Sosthènes very graciously at her house. The new Minister, when thanking Juliette for her congratulations, gave her news about the political situation. "We hear no more about M. de Chateaubriand," he wrote to her on the 1st of September;³ "people say he is travelling. Why did he not adopt the noble and dignified attitude of M. de Montmorency?" Queen Hortense had received Mme. Récamier's confidences at Rome. When back in Arenenberg she sent her a few lines⁴ telling her how sorry she was "to see a distinguished man kept aloof from public affairs." Chateaubriand alone did not write; his thoughts were elsewhere. We only know that Mme. Récamier received a letter at Naples from Greece, telling her of the consternation of the Hellenist chiefs at the news of the decree of June 6th, and that she sent this flattering informa-

¹ See Lanson, *La Défection de Chateaubriand*, p. 495. ² *Ibid.*, 496.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 131. See too p. 152 and following, a very fine letter from the Duc de Doudeauville.

⁴ See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 136-137.

tion to Chateaubriand on the 29th of October, 1824.¹ She added a few pleasant phrases, but we do not know whether he answered her.

Mathieu de Montmorency continued sending his sincerely affectionate letters from Paris. He did not much like Juliette asking him for news of the dismissed Minister. "It is M. de Chat. himself, in his present leisure time, who ought to tell you now² about himself, sweet friend," he writes on the 15th of June, 1824. "We have increased by one notch our reciprocal kindness, but that is all. I have called on his wife; that was obligatory. I told him that I had written to you and that you would write to him. The *Journal des Débats* is indulging in personal devotion to him and anger with the rest of the Ministers. I refer you to him. I am rather tired of politics just now."³ Juliette was very much missed in the little valley where Mathieu now took refuge from the agitations of political life, less courageous or wiser than Chateaubriand, whose violence he disliked.⁴ The Ambassador at Naples, M. de Serre, died, and in Paris it was said that he might possibly be replaced by Mme. Récamier's impulsive friend. "I do not think he would go there," wrote Mathieu, "but I would not swear to it yet. I will not allow myself to make unpleasant jokes, though, particularly as I have had the best and most consoling news from Adrien about your reasonableness, and I hasten to offer you my homage. My cold reason goes almost as far as to find it wrong that you have not written to him at all since his retirement from office. This is too much, because it is not natural."⁵

Mathieu would have set out for Rome, but for his mother's objection to the plan.⁶ He was obliged to give up the idea and continue his rôle of informer. "Have you been deceived like all Paris," he asks Mme. Récamier on the 2nd November,

¹ *M.O.T.*, IV, pp. 324 and 325.

² Now and not from henceforth.

³ Letter No. 159 of M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 124.

⁴ Letter No. 160, of July 22nd. See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 120 and following.

⁵ Unpublished passage of letter No. 162 of the collection. See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 126 and following.

⁶ Letter No. 163, of October 29th. See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 154 and following.

" by an article in the *Journal des Débats* in which M. de Salvandy ventured to imitate M. de Chateaubriand and obtained congratulations."¹ Sometimes Mathieu enters into exact business details. On the 8th of January, 1825, he writes as follows: "Mme. de Montmirail died a few days ago, and her flat is now at your disposal, according to former arrangements. This at least is rumoured in the convent and in town. What do you intend doing about it? Shall you live in it, and which will you give up?"²

Mme. Récamier was decidedly stern as far as Chateaubriand was concerned. The following letter from Mathieu gives us a fresh proof of this: "I ask for nothing better than to be proud of having received a few [of your letters] more than another friend, whom I for a wonder saw yesterday at his own house, at a business interview concerning Adrien. He asked me twice for news of you. I should be still more vexed if you wrote to him more often and longer letters, but, according to my idea of the proprieties, I must say that absolute silence is a trifle affected and can only lead to explanations. I have carried out all your orders, particularly the one concerning Mme. de Boigne."³ The idea of Mathieu de Montmorency begging for Chateaubriand is certainly an unexpected and remarkable change. All the Duke's ill-humour was from henceforth concentrated on Sosthènes, the "busy" and "important" Sosthènes,⁴ who had been entrusted by his father with the direction of the Beaux-Arts. In the history of the intercourse between Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier there was, at the epoch we have reached, a short period rather obscure. Their correspondence had not completely ceased, as the letter of October 29th proves, but it had slackened in the most singular way. There was embarrassment on both sides.

At Naples, Mme. Lefebvre had introduced to Juliette young Charles Lenormant, whom Ballanche and Ampère already

¹ Unpublished letter, No. 164 of the collection. This phrase is inserted by mistake in another of Mathieu's letters. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 155.

² Unpublished letter, No. 167 of the collection.

³ Unpublished letter of January 20th, 1825, No. 168 of the collection.

⁴ Same letter. See the letter No. 169 of the collection published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 168 and following.

knew.¹ Charles Lenormant was born on the 1st of June, 1802, in Paris. At the age of fourteen he had lost his father, who was a notary, and whom he would probably have succeeded if the father's death had not compelled him to carve out a career for himself. He had been very well educated at the Lycée Charlemagne and the Lycée Napoléon, and had at an early age showed a marked taste for the study of antiquity. "It was through love of art that he had taken up archæology, and this love continued to inspire him in the choice and in the accomplishment of his most important works."² In 1824 he went to Italy to accompany an amateur of art, and had just returned from Sicily when he was introduced to Mme. Récamier. She invited him to come and see her in Rome.

When she was back in the city with her niece and Ballanche, Mme. Récamier took up her abode in the Sciarra Palace, on the Corso, in a flat she had rented from Lord Kinnaird.³ A few interesting events occurred at the close of her stay in Italy.

It was, perhaps, about this time that she saw King Louis of Bavaria again. She had known him when he was only the Prince Royal. He had been to her house to see her portrait, painted by Gérard.⁴ Louis I of Bavaria, who ascended the throne in 1825, was still at that date a Liberal. Mme. de Staél had defined him as "a kind man with a mind and soul." He loved the arts passionately. According to Mme. Lenormant,⁵ he was extremely attentive to Mme. Récamier.

It was at this time, too, and at Rome, that Juliette Récamier became friendly with Mme. Swetchine.⁶ By a strange coincidence, Mme. Swetchine had left Paris in 1823 to escape some rather grave difficulties. She had adopted a young girl named Nadine Staeline, for whom Falloux tells us with discretion⁷ that "General Swetchine had a fatherly affection." The youngest son of the Comtesse Octave de Ségar, Raymond de Ségar d'Aguesseau, having manifested his intention of marrying Mlle. Staeline,⁸ Mme. Swetchine felt it her duty to leave for Italy with the young girl. Her letter⁹ gives

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 147-148.

² H. Wallon, *Notice sur Charles Lenormant*, p. 4.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 151. ⁴ *Ibid.*, I, p. 92 and following.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁶ *Ibid.*, II, p. 160 and following.

⁷ *Mme. Swetchine*, by Comte de Falloux, I, p. 56.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 258 and following.

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us some information about the state of Rome at the time when Mme. Récamier was staying there.

Mme. Swetchine was on friendly terms with the Duc de Laval and the Duc de Rohan. She met Mme. Récamier, and her first criticism of her was somewhat harsh. "The Duc de Laval," she writes on the 13th of February, 1824,¹ "is at everything; Mme. Récamier goes nowhere, and appears to really prefer a quiet life. I do not think she aims at effect, and it is a good thing; her beauty and celebrity being on the decline, *débris* would scarcely make any sensation in a country of ruins. It seems that, in order to be attracted by her, one has to know her more, and after such brilliant successes nothing certainly could be more flattering than to be able to reckon now, as she does, on as many friends as there were formerly adorers. Perhaps, though—not that I want to detract from her merit—if she had been in love just once, the number would have been considerably less. Passion, which is exclusive in its nature, affects the vanity of those who are hoping, even more than their feelings."

This first criticism was quickly modified when, through the Duc de Laval, the two women had learnt to know each other better. As early as the month of December, 1824, Mme. Swetchine writes as follows to the Duc de Laval: "I have found your friend just as you had depicted her; your portraits do more than resemble her, they have all the expression and grace of the model. It is a happy kind of friendship which can make others divine all that it knows itself."² Some time after this Mme. Swetchine wrote to Mme. Récamier from Naples. She declared herself quite conquered: "I found myself friendly with you before I had thought of not allowing myself to be so.³ I yielded to that penetrating, indescribable charm which subjugates even those about whom you do not care. I miss you just as though we had spent a long time together, as though we had many mutual souvenirs: how is it that we should feel so much poorer on losing something that we did not possess yesterday?" Mme. Récamier on her side

¹ *Mme. Swetchine*, by Comte de Falloux, I, pp. 264-265.

² *Ibid.*, p. 280.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 281, and *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 162 and following. M. de Falloux gives this letter in part. See also *C.L.A.R.*, No. 124.

acknowledged that she had developed a "passion" for Mme. Swetchine.¹ "She is a most witty and pleasant person," she said. Mme. Swetchine later on took the flat which Mme. Récamier vacated in the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Ballanche liked her, although at times he considered that she was too obscure and had too much subtlety.²

Canova had been replaced at Rome by Thorwaldsen, who in 1824 was in all the force of his talent. The great Danish sculptor had among his pupils Pietro Tenerani, from whom Mme. Récamier ordered a bas-relief of a subject taken from the *Martyrs*.³ It represented the martyrdom of Eudore and of Cymodocée.⁴ This was the bas-relief that Mme. Récamier left, in her will of 1842, to the museum of St.-Malo.

Ballanche had once more commenced writing on Roman history. He was enjoying "intellectual life with delight, and that of the heart without too much suffering."⁵ He was following out his ideas and developing them. He declared himself satisfied with his discoveries, and intended to publish his work in Paris.⁶ At the beginning of 1825, he went on a little excursion to Tuscany to meet a family he knew, and also to complete his researches.⁷

"Here I am then, all alone at my fireside," he wrote to Mme. Récamier, "trying to meditate on ancient Roman history, and only being able to think of Rome of to-day. Here it seems to me I am like an exiled Roman citizen, for it is not for Paris that I long. Nevertheless, I am looking through several books I have bought here, but I cannot fix my attention thoroughly on them. I have an idea about things which will extend still further the field of my researches. I am confounded with astonishment when I think that a history which has so often been examined and discussed should still remain to be written completely all over again. The veritable historian, then, is, in all the force of the term, a

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 243.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 161.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 158 and following.

⁴ The work was finished in 1828.

⁵ Letter from M. de Givré to J. J. Ampère, *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 324.

⁶ Letter from Ballanche to J. J. Ampère, *ibid.*, I, p. 341.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, p. 360.

prophet of the past. The gift of prophecy or of divination can be applied, then, to the past as much as to the future. If you were a metaphysician I should tell you that, in this case, prophecy is a synthesis.”¹

But the event which affected Ballanche most keenly, and which brought to an end the exile in Italy, was a letter from Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier. On the 4th of March, when at Pisa, Ballanche heard from Mlle. Amélie Cyvoct the news that René had begun once more his correspondence with Juliette. “I am relieved,” he wrote to the young girl, “that M. de Chateaubriand has written. I fancy that he is very sad, banished from our neighbourhood. This will make matters more easy for the return; he is not as much hurt as I feared.” He then adds slyly: “Pisa appears to me to be the abode of profound serenity. I do not know whether people are agitated here as they are elsewhere.”²

With Mme. Récamier Ballanche is more explicit:

“The news Mlle. Amélie gives me causes me great pleasure,” he writes on the 5th of March. “The road back will be freed from a few thorns. We must hope that others will also be removed after these. . . . I should very much like to have the telegraph giving me news of you hour by hour. . . . I have no desire to stay here eternally. I am thinking about your situation all the time, and I cannot talk about it to anyone. This anxiety here by myself would be unbearable if it were to continue. I am only attending to my Roman history vaguely. . . . Have courage; the time of peace always comes in the end. If we do not find peace in Paris we shall find it some day in Rome.”

The letter written by Ballanche two days later is still more touching:³

“I quite suspected,” he writes to his friend, “that your

¹ Letter No. 87 of M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection, published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 66.

² Unpublished letter from Pisa, dated March 4th. (From a collection of seventeen of Ballanche’s letters to different persons in M. Ch. de Loménie’s MSS.)

³ Unpublished letter No. 88 in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. The delicious fragment published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 67, should be added to this. Adrien de Montmorency, in a letter of November 18th, 1824, calls Ballanche “the man without a name, but not without a heart.”

resentment would not hold out. There are some things too antipathetic to our nature, and yours is certainly all mildness. The sadness which absorbs him does not surprise me. The thing to which he had consecrated his public life is accomplished. He is surviving himself, and there is nothing sadder than to survive one's self. In order not to survive one's self one must be sustained by moral sentiment. Your sweet compassion, then, will thus be his best refuge. I hope you will convert him to moral sentiment. You must make him understand that the finest faculties, the most brilliant fame, are mere dust if they do not receive life and fecundity from moral sentiment.”¹

The letter to which Ballanche alludes was no doubt the following one. Mme. Récamier had asked Chateaubriand to join her in Italy, and he replied as follows :

“ PARIS, February 9th, 1825.

“ Your proposal, Madame, has awakened in me painful memories. I cannot accept it. I do not know what will become of me, and it is possible that I shall not end my life in France. That life has been too agitated and what remains of it is too short for me to be able to make any plans. It is for you, Madame, who have so many friends and such faithful friends, to come and place yourself amongst them and not to leave them any more. I who did not deserve to meet with ungrateful people, since I have done so little good, I shall endure my fate to the end. May yours be a happy one, Madame, and may justice be rendered to your goodness, your generosity, to the sweetness and nobility of your soul, as it has been rendered to your beauty ! ”²

This event, the arrival of this letter awaited so long, obliged the romantic Ampère to take a secondary place. From Paris he had continued to tell Mme. Récamier any news that might interest her.³ He appeared to be cured of his mad passion for Juliette.

¹ These words, which are on p. 86 of M. Ch. de Loménié's large collection, have been published with two slight variations in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 182.

² Letter, with neither address nor signature, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection among Chateaubriand's letters.

³ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, from p. 300 to p. 362.

In that part of his *Souvenirs* which has been published recently,¹ and which is the most sincere, as it was taken from the original manuscript of the author after his death, Delécluze tells of an evening he spent with Ampère. The young writer read his elegy entitled *Venise*. He confided to him that Louise—it is thus that Delécluze designates Mme. Récamier—"had never loved him seriously." Ampère summed up the adventure which for him had only ended in November as follows: "Enthusiasm at first; hope fading at Florence, lost at Rome, completely given up at Naples, hence the return." And Delécluze, who sees in this an intellectual love affair, concludes: "The result was, in this poor young man's mind, a good, romantic, and very compact folly. I had thought this a hundred times, and I told him so once more that evening. He will only be able to extricate himself by means of a very living mistress."²

Thrown upon his own resources, J. J. Ampère exhaled his ill-humour with regard to Chateaubriand in an article in the *Globe* of March 26th, 1825, on the subject of the *Voyage dans le Latium* by Bonstetten.³ With Mme. Récamier, on the contrary, he was always respectful and submissive.

Mme. Récamier replied to his letters. When he announced to her that he "was making an art of amusements" and that he was becoming dissipated,⁴ she scolded him in a friendly way. "Do you know," she wrote to him, "that I am not very well pleased with your last letter, that I do not like all these plans for amusement at all; you are lucky that I am in a hurry to-day, as that will save you from a sermon. I am so anxious to take advantage of my last days in Rome that I do not leave myself time to breathe. I am spending my life running about with antiquarians and artists. These are diversions without danger, and much better than going to Mme. Pasta's.⁵ Say to yourself all that I should say to you about all these frivolous amusements, so unworthy of you.

¹ *Revue rétrospective*, IX, 1888, 2, p. 213.

² Compare *Revue rétrospective*, X, 1889, 1, p. 65 and following.

³ See Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 201.

⁴ See the letter of January 22nd, 1825.

⁵ Allusion to Ampère's letter. See *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 329, 351, and 359.

You will say this much better than I could, and I shall be grateful to you for all that you do which is reasonable. Adieu. They are waiting for me. Guérin is out of danger. I am delighted about it, for we have been very anxious."¹

When J. J. Ampère again spoke of his "wretched soul," of his "wasted life," of his "habitual and incurable unhappiness," when he declared that he could no longer find any spirit except for "despairing poetry,"² Mme. Récamier answered him as follows :

" How I blame myself for not writing to you more often, and how kind you are not to be discouraged, but to write to me so punctually! I have read the first act of the piece again, and I read it with fresh admiration. I am impatient to hear what you have done since your return. I do not write to you often, but I think of you a great deal, and if you have reason to complain of my silence you have no reason to complain of my thoughts. We are preparing to leave. You must not send any more letters to Rome; write to Florence, Venice, and Milan. I shall read the Elegy again at Venice in order to be there with you. I am leaving this beautiful Italy with regret, but I think of the return with less dread. Adieu, adieu. I have had a very sad, hopeless letter from M. de Chateaubriand. You have heard, then, of my new passion for Mme. Swetchine? She is taking the flat I am leaving at the Abbaye-aux-Bois."³

Mme. Récamier left Rome on the 20th of April, 1825. The marriage of Mlle. Amélie with Charles Lenormant had been decided on, and this circumstance increased the desire of the voluntary exiles to return to Paris.⁴ On the 23rd of April, the little party had reached Bologna. Mme. Récamier wrote to Ampère from there. "I am," she said, "at the inn where we were together eighteen months ago. I have just heard that music which delighted us so much. My heart is so full with

¹ Unpublished letter from the copy belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie, and dated February 6th.

² See his letter of March 6th, 1825 (*Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 358).

³ Letter of March 25th, part of which is unpublished. It is from a copy belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie. There are other letters from Mme. R. to J. J. Ampère in *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, pp. 239, 241, 242, 244.

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 244.

all that I am leaving and all I am going to meet again, that there is scarcely enough of it left for what I feel now. I am writing very hurriedly. We shall be at Ferrara to-morrow, where I shall try to find souvenirs of Tasso. We shall be at Venice in three days. I thought to have found letters here from you, and suppose I shall have some at Venice. Write, too, to Milan. Adieu, adieu."¹

On the 16th of May, the little colony passed through Milan. They had stayed a week in Venice, where they had met Charles Lenormant again. Mme. Récamier had gone to the little town of Possagno in memory of Canova. At Trieste she saw Mme. Murat, with whom she had a long conversation, whilst the worthy Ballanche philosophized in the corridor with the servants.² The travellers took the Simplon route, and had the most beautiful weather for the journey. Ballanche left his two companions at Geneva, as he was obliged to go to Lyons. They reached Paris almost at the end of May.³

Mme. Récamier had now to arrange for the forthcoming marriage of Mlle. Cyvoct and Charles Lenormant. She wrote to Mme. Delphin, August 17th, 1825, as follows:⁴ "We are now busy with our dear Amélie's marriage. M. Lenormant is a young man of 24, of honourable family, of a perfectly spotless character, and of a distinguished mind. I am asking for the post of auditor to the State Council for him; the conclusion of the marriage depends on this appointment." To this anxiety were added the embarrassment caused by M. Récamier's fresh pecuniary losses and the anguish of having to begin once more with Chateaubriand an intercourse which had formerly been stormy, but which she hoped might be exempt from henceforth from agitations of all kinds.

¹ Unpublished letter, from a copy belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 170 and following.

³ According to an unpublished letter from Ballanche to Ch. Lenormant, dated May 25th, from Geneva. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 176.

CHAPTER XIX

LIFE AT THE ABBAYE-AUX-BOIS

(JUNE 1825—SEPTEMBER 1828.)

Interview with René.—J. J. Ampère takes up again his life of study ; he devotes himself to the history of literatures, and starts for Germany (October 26th).—Mme. Récamier's receptions : Delécluze, Mlle. Mante, Benjamin Constant, Honoré de Balzac.—Marriage of Charles Lenormant and Mlle. Cyvoct (February 1st, 1826).—The *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* and the manuscript of 1826.—Death of Mathieu de Montmorency (March 24th, 1826).—Ampère in Germany ; the incident of the letter on Goethe (May, 1827) ; return to Paris (November, 1827).—Chateaubriand's opposition ; he is appointed Ambassador to Rome.

WHEN Mme. Récamier returned to Paris at the end of May, 1825, Chateaubriand and Mathieu de Montmorency were at Rheims for the coronation of King Charles X. Mathieu sent her his good wishes and welcome.¹ It was not without bitterness, in spite of his splendid contempt, that Chateaubriand saw a King being crowned for whom he claimed to have cleared the path to the throne.² He qualified the coronation as a mere parade, and stormed disdainfully at the crowd of courtiers. He had been invited to the sanctuary of the Cathedral for the coronation, and when the King spoke pleasantly to him³ this kindness did not appease the immense rancour with which his heart was overflowing. His honour and his country, he fancied, were recalling him “to the field of battle,”⁴ and he gathered around him a group of companions for the struggle : de Montalivet, Salvandy,

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 178 and following.

² *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 305 and following.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 310. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 314.

Duvergier de Hauranne.¹ The polemics of the *Débats* had commenced on June 21st, 1824, as we saw. They continued until December 18th, 1826.

What took place at the interview that Juliette accorded to the "melancholy René"? According to Mme. Lenormant, he hastened there at Juliette's request. "Not a word of explanation or of reproach was exchanged."² Absence having appeased all Mme. Récamier's irritation, Chateaubriand's misfortunes, or at least his sufferings, made it possible for her to pardon a fault into which he had been led by the assurance which success had given him. The storm was over, and nothing was from henceforth to interrupt a friendship full of warmth and affection. Juliette's hair was also beginning to turn white now.³

Ampère himself had become quite another man. The separation had transformed him, and from this time forth the passionate lover was no more than a friend to Mme. Récamier, and almost a son. He no longer followed her about everywhere; he did not write to her every day; he continued his studious life, his work as a professor, his vocation as a traveller. He formed new and even deep attachments.⁴ He has noted this change in a poem entitled *Ma vingt-cinquième année*.⁵ In it he says to himself:

" Ne pleure plus sur ta jeunesse
 Et sur le coup qui t'a frappé ;
 Laisse là du bonheur l'inutile promesse,
 Mensonge vain qui t'a trompé ;
 Laisse là le passé—le néant le dévore—
 Et tourne-toi vers l'avenir,
 Vers le temps qui n'est pas encore,
 Le temps qui doit t'appartenir."

Mme. Récamier spent the autumn which followed her return from Rome in the country, at the Vallée-aux-Loups.⁶

¹ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 315. M. G. Lanson has shown (*Revue hist. litt. de la France*, Oct.-Dec. 1902, p. 674 and following) that the Vicomte de la Rochefoucauld wanted to appoint Chateaubriand historiographer of France, and he thought that "Mme. Récamier might serve as intermediary."

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 181.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 573.

⁴ Schérer, *Études*, V, p. 114.

⁵ *Heures de poésie*, p. 12 and following.

⁶ Prince Augustus of Prussia was in Paris, still in love and always

Jean-Jacques settled near, at the house of his friend the poet de Latouche. In October, the Abbaye-aux-Bois circle returned to Paris.¹ Ampère, before renouncing entirely all hope of obtaining Mme. Récamier's love, wanted to make a last effort. After "a certain conversation"² he began to dream of a chance of which he had had a glimpse. "What a blissful idea," he wrote to Juliette. "If it were a hundred times more improbable, it would still be the sole delight, the unique sweetness of my life to imagine it."³ According to Schérer's remark,⁴ there could not have been in this letter any question of a project of divorce, as in 1825 divorce was no longer authorized by French law. It was a question of the possible disappearance from the scene of M. Récamier, who was then nearly seventy-five years of age, and who died a few years later. J. J. Ampère was delighted about the campaign that Chateaubriand was carrying on. He shared the enthusiasm of La Fayette, who in his admiration had sent one of the famous articles of the *Journal des Débats*⁵ to the President of the United States. At the request of Mme. Récamier he gave up his chimerical projects. Other complications also took his attention. André-Marie wanted his son jealous. On the 7th of October, 1825, he wrote to Mme. Récamier as follows:—

"The King of France has just presented me with the game I killed yesterday when out hunting, and I do not think I can put it to better use than to offer you some of it. I am sending you, therefore, a kid and twenty pheasants. I had resolved never to see you again, and your faithlessness in carrying out the promises you made me would justify me completely. But my farewell to you seemed to me a very short one after so long a friendship, and with the uncertainty of ever seeing you again. Deign to write to me, Madame, and tell me whether you will soon be coming back to Paris, and if that should not be possible for you, tell me what day I could see you alone at Val de loup. In spite of all the pain you cause me, it is impossible for you to destroy my friendship for you and the memories that it leaves me for all my life." (Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.) Mme. Récamier received him, and gave him some flowers, which he took with him on his return journey. On the 25th of October, he wrote a very grateful letter from Châlons. On arriving at Berlin, he found an affectionate letter from Juliette. He thanked her for this in a long letter written on the 7th of November. He says shrewdly: "I am venturing to beseech you, dear Juliette, not to busy yourself with making conversions: I fear that the persons whose souls you want to save would endeavour to obtain celestial happiness through you." (Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.)

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 362–363.

² *Ibid.*, p. 364.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Études*, V, p. 111.

⁵ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 368.

to marry. Jean-Jacques would, perhaps, have yielded to the affection shown him by Mlle. Clémentine Cuvier,¹ but he feared Cuvier's tyrannical turn of mind. Mme. Récamier advised him to go away.² He decided to start for Germany, and to devote himself to the history of literature. He left Paris on the 6th of August, 1826.³ He was wise enough to realize that the fresh researches to which he was devoting himself were of more interest, and in the future would be of more importance, than his dramatic attempts, and he explained this to his father. He felt that "flexibility" was "the true characteristic of his talent."⁴ He had rightly judged himself, and this time his decision was taken. He gave up his career as a poet, and at the same time his agitations. He wanted to spend "a winter studying German and Germany," and then see the men and the libraries. "And after this period of trial and of austere labour," he wrote to Mme. Récamier, "having the consciousness of my work and having entered thoroughly into my line, I shall come to you with my mind free from phantoms, I hope, and my heart full of the attachment in which I hope you believe."⁵ On the 8th of October, 1826, when passing through Strasbourg on his way to Germany, he received the simple message: "Come back," from Mme. Brack, Mlle. Cuvier's aunt, but he did not pay any attention to the message.

As soon as Mme. Récamier was in Paris again she began once more her receptions.

During this year, 1825, Delécluze was frequently a guest at her house.⁶ When she was not well he went into her bedroom. The bed was opposite the chimney-piece, and the portrait of Mme. de Staél by Gérard hung between the two windows; there were two book-cases, a sofa, a small desk, a chair, and scarcely anything else in the way of furniture. Juliette took upon herself to be interpreter for the artists who were hurt by the criticisms of Delécluze, particularly for Gérard, whose

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, pp. 247-248.

² Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 199.

³ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 373.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 377-378. Compare p. 422.

⁶ See his *Souvenirs inédits, Revue retrospective*, X, 1889, I, p. 161 and following.

portrait of Louis XIV had been attacked in the *Journal des Débats*. From Delécluze we have the names of other visitors : M. de Castellane, young Lenormant, the Duchesse Raguse, and, of course, Ampère.

Delécluze was present in 1825 at the *soirée* Mme. Récamier gave before leaving her flat.¹ He met there the Comtesse d'Hautpoul, "a wit, a poetess, painfully ugly"; Mme. de Catellan, Mme. de Grammont, M. de Kératry, "who," says Delécluze, "writes always about what is beautiful, although he is so ugly"; the elegant Sosthènes de la Rochefoucauld,² and his father, the Duc de Rochefoucauld, so full of kindness and benevolence; and Mathieu de Montmorency. "M. Ampère, the professor of mathematics, wandered about in an uncertain, timid kind of way among the persons I have mentioned and a crowd of hauntings of drawing-rooms." Delphine Gay recited poetry, and it seems that she was charming that evening.³

Another day it was Mlle. Mante, the actress of the Théâtre Français, whom Delécluze met at Juliette's. The theatre was discussed, and the tyranny exercised there by Talma.⁴ Another day there was what Juliette styled a little Liberal *soirée*, with MM. de Catellan, Kératry, and Benjamin Constant as principal persons.⁵ Juliette asked Benjamin Constant why,

¹ See work quoted, p. 163 and following. Compare *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 288 and following.

² "It would be difficult," says D., "to look more stupid and foolish than this man" (p. 164).

³ On the 6th of October, 1825, Constant wrote to Rosalie as follows : "I have stupidly stayed on in Paris, hampered with the publication of my second volume, which will only be finished to-day, and which is to appear next Monday. You will receive it before anyone else, and I hope you will read it, although it seems to me very dull, perhaps because I have read and corrected it twenty times in manuscript and proof, so that I know all the phrases by heart. I have no idea how it will be received, and I am sorry to say that that scarcely interests me at all. We are living just now at a time when all that is not positive, all that does not bring in a material return, seems to be only an amusement and a loss of time. I cannot discover a public that would have any sympathy with my ideas. All that is not of the steam-engine order is dreaming. . . ." Unpublished letter in the Geneva Library, McC. 36. A letter of September 22nd, 1824, contained the same idea in another form : "We cannot foresee or calculate nowadays what we shall be allowed to print or to say, but in the meantime we must go on working." (Unpublished. Same origin.)

⁴ Work quoted, pp. 167-168.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 168 and following.



Dr. Balme

in his work on *Religions*, he appeared so indifferent about the subject he treated. "He replied that it was less he that spoke in this work than the facts themselves; that he was only responsible for one thing, the quotations he gave and the proofs he set forth. For the rest, he appeared to treat the basis of the work and the criticisms to which it might give rise as a joke." Politics were also discussed; Kératry and Catellan commenced the attack and Constant continued it with all his wit, which was made up of disenchantment and irony.

There were no invitations sent out for these evenings.¹ The Duchesse d'Abrantès took Honoré de Balzac to one of them. He was very little known then. It was about the time that Mme. Récamier gave up her little flat on the third floor for a much larger one on the first floor of the same wing of the house. She was then able to extend her circle considerably. Sometimes there was music, but more often the unpublished works of Chateaubriand, J. J. Ampère, and Delphine Gay were read aloud, or perhaps Talma, who had now left the stage, consented to recite some poetry.²

The marriage of Charles Lenormant with Mlle. Amélie Cyvoct was celebrated on the 1st of February, 1826, in the Church of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. A few months previously he had been appointed Sub-Inspector of Fine Arts in the Royal Household, a function which placed him under the orders of the Vicomte de Rochefoucauld. He had asked to be allowed to continue travelling, and he went to Italy in 1826, and to Belgium and Holland in 1827,³ but he was not able to take his young wife with him.⁴ It had not been easy to obtain this appointment for Charles Lenormant, and the negotiations had been slow.

"Truly," wrote Adrien de Montmorency from Albano, on the 17th of October, 1825, "when I read over your two letters which I have by me, the one so lamentable and the other so elated with joy, I seem to recognize in them something of

¹ Delécluze, *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 284.

² *Ibid.*, p. 285.

³ See *Beaux-arts et voyages* by Ch. Lenormant, 2 vols. in-8.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 198. H. Wallon, *Notice sur Ch. Lenormant*, p. 5 and following.

those sudden misfortunes and joys of the Vicar of Wakefield. My compliments to the maiden of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. She was so little worried or anxious about the future, she appeared to be so calm about all her risks, that she proves the truth to me of a little novel of Voltaire's, entitled, I believe, *Macquart*, or happiness. The moral is that if happiness wants anything to do with you, it will come and look for you at your own fireside, without your giving yourself the trouble to go in search of it. . . . Not only your household, but all your intimate friends, must be feeling perfect joy. You do not tell me any more about M. Ampère, his works, his sentiments, which are perhaps slightly affected by the arrival and the attentions of the great person whose assiduity you describe to me. Really all the satisfactions of the affections and of pride are heaped upon you.”¹

It certainly seemed as though Mme. Récamier, glad to get back to her old way of living, to have settled matters satisfactorily for her niece, and above all to have renewed her friendship with Chateaubriand, was forgetting some of the bitterness of late years. Her *salon* at the Abbaye-aux-Bois had never been so animated. Shortly after her niece's marriage, according to Delécluze,² the commencement of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* was read there to a few intimate friends. It was the fragment in which Chateaubriand describes the life he led at the Château of Combourg. “All the audience was really moved: it seemed as though the author himself was also, for he had to wipe tears away.” This fragment had been composed a long time ago. Book III of the first part of his *Mémoires*, to which Delécluze refers, had been written in 1817, at the Château of Montboissier and at the Vallée-aux-Loups.³

In the leisure time that his activity as a pamphleteer gave him Chateaubriand returned to his *Mémoires*. The work was not yet called *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*. In 1826, the whole of the first part was finished and Mme. Récamier, helped by

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. The last visit of Prince Augustus to France took place in 1825. *Souv. et Corr.*, I p. 148.

² *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 286.

³ See edition Biré, I, p. 123, note 1.

Charles Lenormant, copied from the author's manuscript the first three books. This was the copy published in 1874 under the title of *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse de Chateaubriand : manuscrit de 1826*. The text of this is rather different from that published in 1848. The details of the account were less exact than those later on. On the other hand, the style was more sober and more severe. As Chateaubriand grew older he became more voluminous in style, and endeavoured to accentuate the relief and exaggerate effects.¹ This copy, then, is of the greatest literary interest. Mme. Récamier had several manuscripts of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*. Besides the copy made in 1826, entitled *Mémoires de ma vie, commencés en 1809*, a manuscript was found among her papers, written by Pilorge, with corrections in the handwriting of Chateaubriand. This second collection is in five large volumes in-quarto, bound in blue morocco, and entitled *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe, quatrième et dernière carrière, mélange des trois précédentes*. These volumes had been looked through by Chateaubriand, if we are to trust to the dates they bear, in February, 1845, and February, 1848.² A third collection contains only the biography of Mme. Récamier—that is, Book XI of the third part. This book XI was only written in 1839.³ It was much later, then, that this large in-quarto was given to Mme. Récamier.⁴ These various collections must not be confounded with each other. The manuscript that Mme. Récamier wrote in 1826 goes as far as the author's eighteenth year, up to the time when he went to Cambrai to join the regiment of the Navarre Infantry.⁵ There is a tradition that Faugère, Pascal's publisher, had in his possession several sheets of an autograph manuscript of the *Mémoires* exactly like the partial copy of Mme. Récamier's.⁶

¹ See *Esquisse d'un Maître*, Preface, Biré, *Introduction* to his edition, p. xxiv. See Giraud, *Chateaubriand et les Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, p. 650.

² According to the C.L.A.R., No. 33.

³ Biré, edition of the *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 371, note 1.

⁴ See C.L.A.R., Nos. 32 and 33. M. A. Albalat has described the Champion manuscripts in the *Révue de Paris*, Feb. 1st, 1903.

⁵ Biré, *Introduction*, p. xxiv.

⁶ See Giraud, *Chateaubriand et les Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, p. 651. This question of the establishment of the text of the *Mémoires* has never been elucidated, and remains very confused.

This sort of collaboration, the circumstances and date of which should be settled precisely by literary history, marks Chateaubriand's return to favour. From thenceforth he was to be the one to give to Mme. Récamier's *salon* its originality and its greatest splendour.¹ Everything was arranged there for his glory. This *salon* was not a political one. Mme. Récamier declared that it was "neutral ground,"² and truly, if Liberals did appear to find greater favour there, particularly at the time when Chateaubriand seemed to be working for them, Juliette never dreamed of excluding a Montmorency, a Laval, a Doudeauville, or a La Rochefoucauld, whose friendship she had proved in critical times. At Mme. Swetchine's (whom Mme. Récamier had persuaded to come and live at the Abbaye)³ the tendencies were distinct. This was, as a biographer has said, "a Christian home." Not that Mme. Swetchine brought intolerance to bear, for she had no liking for violence. She professed to have a horror of groups

¹ Jealousy inspired Prince Augustus to write some very charming letters. On the 7th of December, he wrote to Mme. Récamier from Berlin : "It is always with keen emotion that I receive all news from you, but your last letter caused me pain. You tell me of the sorrow that you felt at my departure, and you say you have *great need of my sermons*, and above all of me, to make you reconciled with your fate. But at the same time you tell me that you see M. de C. every day, that you *delight intensely* in the superiority of his intelligence and in the gracefulness of his conversations, and that you would like to bring him back to more severe principles ; that he sometimes lets you have *a hope* of this, and that this is perhaps only *one more of his fascinations*. I like frankness too much to blame it, even when it hurts me, but I must confess that I have not yet arrived at the degree of perfection necessary for going so rapidly from one sentiment to another. As you have found a consoler who is so agreeable, I am quite persuaded that your sadness will not last long ; and when you have finished the conversion of M. de C., you will obtain a very distinguished place among the missionaries. It seems even that you like braving dangers, because, in spite of my earnest entreaties, you will absolutely insist on exposing yourself to those which you might easily avoid. The way in which you go about your conversions is no doubt new, but I am sure it will have the greatest success. I must own, though, that in spite of my only being an unfortunate heretic, this mixture of religious ideas and of very worldly sentiments cannot be justified." (Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.) On the 18th of January, 1826, he writes again to Mme. Récamier : "Accept my thanks for the last edition of the *Note sur la Grèce*, which I have commenced reading with the greatest interest. I have found some pieces in it of rare eloquence, and I very much regret not being able to contribute to the success of this fine work otherwise than by my good wishes and my subscription." (Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.)

² Degérando, *Lettres inédites*, p. 25. ³ Falloux, *Mme. Swetchine*, I, p. 323.

and coteries, but, whether she wished it or not, “the Catholic spirit shed its rays there naturally.”¹ There was more liberty at Mme. Récamier’s. She only demanded of her guests apparent deference to Chateaubriand.

People have made fun, and Mérimée more than anyone else, of the way in which these receptions were organized. Delécluze gives us exact details about this.² Mme. Récamier had five or six circles of chairs placed, the circles at some little distance from each other. The women sat down, and the men moved about between the rows of chairs. She took the guests as they arrived to their friends, endeavouring to form groups, and only to bring together those who had tastes in common. Lamartine considered this *salon* “formal,”³ and compares it to “an Academy holding its meetings in a monastery.” “The arrangement and the etiquette,” he said, “classified the various ranks too much. If Mme. de Broglie’s *salon* was a Chamber of Peers, Mme. de Sainte-Aulaire’s a Chamber of Deputies, Mme. de Girardin’s a Republic, Mme. de Récamier’s was a Monarchy.” No doubt this arrangement was rather too geometrical and wanting in freedom. Juliette used not to receive in this way under the Directory, we must remember. There was too much disorder formerly in those noisy fêtes, which were somewhat mob-like, and now there was too much order in these *soirées*, at which everyone found his or her place arranged beforehand. Mme. Récamier no longer had the same resources: she received a great number of guests, and her fortune was now very moderate indeed, so that it was ungracious of Lamartine to jeer at her “simple and worn” furniture. She did not pretend now to give fêtes, and this arrangement of her *soirées*, in which some people considered there was great art, had for her the merit of setting off to advantage the man in whose honour these receptions were organized, namely Chateaubriand. Mathieu de Montmorency had accepted the new situation with a good grace. He was

¹ Falloux, *Mme. Swetchine*, I, p. 317. About Mme. Récamier’s receptions, see Coulmann, *Réminiscences*, I, p. 201. About Delécluze’s Sundays, see Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, III, p. 107 and following. About Viollet le Duc’s Fridays, *ibid.*, p. 119.

² *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 287.

³ *Cours familier de littérature*, IX, p. 56.

at Mme. Récamier's the evening when Delphine Gay celebrated the coronation of Charles X in a somewhat strange composition, in which Joan of Arc appeared. The young muse, who was not wanting in self-confidence, invited the King to maintain *the Charter*, to preserve the *liberty of the press*, and not to repulse the advances of the *Liberal party*.¹ The serenity with which Mathieu took this little demonstration was noticed by those present. He was now very much in favour at Court. The Academician, Bigot de Préameneu, had died, and Mathieu de Montmorency had been induced to solicit his chair. According to the Duchesse d'Abrantès,² the Academy elections depended chiefly on François Roger, the dramatic author, of whom she gives us a not very pleasing portrait. It is, however, probable that Chateaubriand's support contributed much more than Roger's intrigues to Mathieu de Montmorency's election to the Academy. He was elected on the 3rd of November, 1825, and he then wanted to give up the pension attached to his fresh title. On Mme. Récamier's advice he desired it to be offered to Mme. Desbordes-Valmore, who refused it. Henri de Latouche was entrusted with the negotiation, but he could not or would not overcome Marceline's scruples.

Public opinion saw in this election a proof of Mme. Récamier's influence, and it was made a pretext for attacking her. This was not the first time she had been exposed to malignant criticism. In 1825, the pedantic Mme. de Genlis published, in the sixth volume of her *Mémoires*, several rather disagreeable portraits of Juliette, which were supposed to be written in a kindly spirit.³ Mme. de Genlis rather soon afterwards made an apology for this by leaving to Mme. Récamier in her will, which was made in 1827, "as a pledge of loving friendship,"⁴ two unpublished stories, the title of one of which was *Les Deux Bals*. Juliette had friends to defend her. The *Globe*, for instance, of April 29th, 1826, published a very

¹ Delécluze, *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 290.

² *Mémoires sur la Restauration*, VI, p. 111 and following.

³ See p. 107. Compare p. 127, VII, p. 142 and following, p. 164 and following, p. 168, VIII, p. 26 and following, p. 31.

⁴ Published by Henri Lapauze, *Mme. de Genlis et son fils adoptif, Casimir Baecker*, in the *Revue de Paris*, February 1st, 1902, see p. 605.

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eulogistic portrait of her.¹ But Mathieu de Montmorency's election lent itself certainly to criticism, and it was the pretext for a little campaign in which Mme. Récamier was not spared.

In 1826, the second edition of an anonymous volume was published in Paris, entitled *Biographie des quarante de l'Académie Française*.² The author of this work posed as a determined enemy of the Academy. "It has placed itself, through the organ of its dumb people," he wrote,³ "outside literature and the needs of our times." The biography of Chateaubriand was written in a very moderate tone, but with regard to the Duc de Montmorency the anonymous pamphleteer went as far as cruelty. "The only thing wanting for M. de Montmorency was the title of Academician; his history is now complete: demi-Republican in 1789, parish churchwarden under the Imperial Government, Jesuit in 1821, restorer of Spain in 1822, a fallen Minister, and then Academician; *abyssus abyssum avocat*."⁴ Mme. Récamier was not spared, and the duke's portrait finished with the following lines:

Cette Circé de l'Abbaye-aux-Bois,
Beauté fantasque et fière châtelaine,
Qui reduisit tant d'amans aux abois,
Et qui depuis, amante de la croix,
Pour sa patronne [sic] a choisi Magdeleine,
La R——r puisqu'il faut par son nom,
Vous désigner la moderne Ninon,
Disait un soir: Tout ce que chante Homère
Des compagnons d'Ulysse et de Circé
Parait fort simple et ne m'étonne guère.
Prodige égal de nos jours s'est passé:
Or, n'allez pas me traiter de Lamie;
Par mon pouvoir, sans bouger de mon val,
Hier, j'ai fait de messire Laval
Un membre de l'Académie. (*Les Biographies.*)

The upright Mathieu was not destined to enjoy very long the honours which he owed rather to his integrity than to his

¹ No. 55, reproduced in part in the *Arch. hist. et stat. du département du Rhône*, IV, pp. 75-76.

² On sale at the drapers' shops.

³ Preface, p. viii.

⁴ Pp. 265 and 266.

talent. On the 11th of January, 1826, he received the title of guardian to the Duc de Bordeaux.¹ On Good Friday, March 24th, he went to service at the church of St. Thomas d'Aquin, and died suddenly during one of the prayers.² Mme. Récamier mourned for him sincerely. Without any of the qualities for outward charm, too much given to sermonizing and too pedantic, but passionately loyal and faithful in all matters of honour, he had accompanied Juliette about and watched over her with jealous solicitude. She regretted her "grumbling Mentor" with all her soul, and she buried with him some of the dearest memories of her life. It was nearly all her past gliding into the tomb—all at least that was connected with Mme. de Staél, with her own youth, with love adventures, her domestic misfortunes, and the persecutions she had endured.

At the next sitting of the Chamber of Peers, the Duc de Doudeauville pronounced the eulogium of Mathieu. Biographical notices appeared during the year.³ Sainte-Beuve sums up rather happily the judgment which history is likely to give of the Duc de Montmorency. He congratulated himself on having had the opportunity of reading a few of those long letters of his to Juliette, and considers that they have certain advantages even over those of Chateaubriand. "He stands out beautiful and benign," he says,⁴ "by the very contrast; and in modern generations those who still care for such things will be able hereafter to have an idea of this last man of many great races, of this last of the *prud'hommes*, as they were called in the days of St. Louis."

Chateaubriand sympathized with Mme. Récamier in her grief.⁵ It was not then, as Mme. Lenormant believed, that he

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 198 and following. *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 330.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 199 and following. "He went into God's presence on his knees, a prayer on his lips." John Lemoine, *Débats* of November 24th, 1859. Compare *Souvenirs de Duc de Broglie*, III, pp. 31 and 32.

³ See, at the Bibliothèque Nationale, the list of these pamphlets. *Catal. de l'Hist. de France*, X.

⁴ *Causeries du Lundi*, XIV, p. 309.

⁵ On the 16th of April, 1826, Prince Augustus of Prussia wrote a very touching letter of condolence to Mme. Récamier. Unpublished letter, No. 96 of the series in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

wrote the beautiful prayer *On the loss of a person dear to us.*¹ It is more probable that this prayer was written in 1803, on the death of Mme. de Beaumont,² but he reserved a place for Mathieu in his *Mémoires*.³ He accompanied him religiously to the Picpus cemetery. "At the bottom of the grave," writes Chateaubriand, with that pitiless observation which makes something out of all details, "the rope turned the coffin of this Christian on to its side, and it was as though he were raising himself to pray once more."⁴

For Adrien the sorrow was immense, as his weakness had often found refuge in Mathieu's virtue. He had now lost a brother, "an angelic friend."⁵ It was a fresh loss to add to so many other cruel ones. "My heart has not become hardened," he wrote to Juliette,⁶ "but, smitten so frequently, so cruelly in my early family affections, I am like those old soldiers who are accustomed to seeing themselves surrounded with the dead on the battle-field. One does not get consoled, but one learns to suffer and to bear without complaining the unendurable weight of so many ills."⁷

As soon as the first grief of the family was appeased, Mme. Récamier began to think of honouring her friend's memory. She asked Adrien de Montmorency for all the information he could give respecting the life, deeds, and unexecuted plans of

¹ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 209 and following. *M.O.T.*, edition Biré, IV, Appendix viii; *La mort du duc M. de Montmorency*.

² G. Pailhès, *Du nouveau sur Joubert*, p. 524.

³ See particularly IV, p. 330.

⁴ *M.O.T.*, VI, p. 386. A letter from the Duchesse de Montmorency to Mme. R. (unpublished letter, No. 17 of the collection in M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.) confirms the hypothesis of Pailhès. The duchess, to whom Mme. R. sent a copy of the prayer, replies that she already had it, and criticizes it without adding a word of thanks to Chateaubriand.

⁵ See his letter in *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 201 and following.

⁶ Unpublished letter of April 25th, 1826, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁷ From the time Mme. Gay knew that Mathieu de Montmorency was ill (as for some months before his death his friends had been anxious about his state of health) she was assiduous in her inquiries about him at Mme. Récamier's. Ballanche said that she was so anxious because she wanted to know whether her daughter ought to write verses on convalescence or on death. The day after the funeral, at the house of the artist Gérard, and before Ingres, Pradier, and others, the "young muse" recited some very second-rate poetry on the death of Mathieu de Montmorency, which she hawked about from *salon* to *salon*.—Delécluze, *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 291 and following.

Mathieu Chateaubriand was to write a biography. "It will be Tacitus writing the life of Agricola," said Adrien, "and I venture to think he will have finer things to tell. You will be the principle, the soul of this consolation, the only one worthy of its object. Will you thank M. de Ch. from me with all that sweet grace which makes everything that goes through you of such value?"¹

Mme. Récamier's relative, Brillat-Savarin, had died on the 2nd of February, 1826.² A few months before his end he had published his famous *Physiologie du goût*.³ He, too, had been a friend during critical times, like Mathieu de Montmorency, like Jordan, whose *Speeches* were published in 1826,⁴ preceded by an Elogium written by Ballanche. Talma died on the 19th of October, 1826.

Mme. Récamier had her "domestic Plato" to console her for her losses. Ballanche was a sort of living connecting link for her between her former friends and her new ones. As we have seen, J. J. Ampère started on his travels in August 1826. He was exiling himself in order to conquer durable success and to obtain, on his return, the "esteem" of those who, after encouraging his first efforts, had had doubts about him during his first struggles.⁵ Perhaps in his disguised reproaches he was referring to Chateaubriand, and even to the Abbaye. It seems very much like it, but later on Ampère became quite reconciled to Chateaubriand. When travelling in Greece, a certain year, he gathered a spray of laurel within the sacred precincts at Delphi, and sent it to this glorious writer.⁶ At the time of his departure for Germany, though, he was still angry with the all-powerful rival who had thrown him into the background.

Here, too, Mme. Récamier intervened in order to make things smooth and bring about harmony. Ampère had planned to spend the winter at Bonn.⁷ Niebuhr was teaching

¹ Unpublished letter from Adrien de Montmorency, March 16th, 1826, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² *Notice nécrologique sur Brillat-Savarin*, by H. Roux, Paris, 1826, in-8. Bibliothèque Nationale, L N°27, 3023.

³ Paris, 1825, in-8.

⁴ Paris, J. Renouard in-8.

⁵ *Heures de Poésie, Ma vingt-sixième année*, p. 16.

⁶ Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 216.

⁷ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 248.

history there. After his various adventures it was to this town that he had retired to devote himself to his great works. The elder of the two Schlegels was teaching the history of literature and art. He was a friend of Mme. Récamier's.¹ She had known him in the days of Mme. de Staél, together with Constant, Barante, the Montmorencys, and Fauriel. She had met him again at the time of the Restoration and on the death of their illustrious mutual friend, and it was he who had later on helped in editing the *Considérations sur la Révolution*.

Alexis de Jussieu kept Ampère informed about the Abbaye news, and in his turn confessed himself to be *under the spell*.² Juliette herself sent a few lines of her "small handwriting" to Bonn.³ Ch. Lenormant kept up an interesting correspondence with the traveller. "We often talk of your great decision at the Abbaye," he said, "and we are all delighted about it. It seems to us all that there is no one more fitted than you to widen the field, so restricted here, of literary criticism. . . . Everything continues to drive us towards history; we must consider it as our ark of salvation."⁴ Ampère gave Mme. Récamier full details about Niebuhr's teaching,⁵ either mingled with or followed by reflections that were really very judicious. He congratulated himself on having found peace in an entirely intellectual life. "I have learnt three things here," he confesses: "the extent of what I ignored, what I had to learn, and how I must learn it."⁶

Mme. Lenormant has published some of Mme. Récamier's letters to J. J. Ampère.⁷ She begged him to apply to her if he had "any temporary difficulties in his finances." She had very cleverly discerned the chief defect in Ampère, and she told him of it. "I never doubted the faculties of your mind," she says, "but I feared that the mobility of your character might prevent your making the best of them."⁸ She congratulated him on his care in studying the exegesis, and she

¹ See C.L.A.R., No. 119. Compare *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 412.

² *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 392. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 395.

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, pp. 251 and 252.

⁵ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, pp. 398 and 399.

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 405 and 406.

⁷ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 257 and following. ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

added shrewdly, "Since you can no longer believe with the simple, believe with savants; we shall arrive like this by different ways at the same result."¹ Mme. Récamier was glad to see Alexis de Jussieu, but she thought him too frivolous. "No one can do anything really remarkable," she insisted, "except by force of will and perseverance."²

When the university course was over Jean-Jacques Ampère went to pay his respects to Goethe at Weimar. He was received "with open arms."³ Goethe already knew him from translating two articles that young Ampère had devoted to him in the *Globe*. The traveller thought "the great man very kind, very simple, very well in health, and very pleasant."⁴ Goethe admired the *Globe* and *Clara Gazul*; he was on friendly terms with Cuvier,⁵ he respected Cousin,⁶ and Ampère made a conquest of him by his agreeable ways. "I was able to penetrate further into his soul," he wrote to his father, "to hear him talk for several hours at a stretch, and he opened his heart with a spiritedness and a warmth which seemed to be fifty years younger than his age. What is so admirable is that he keeps up with everything, is interested in everything, is in everything."⁷

An incident occurred which came very near compromising this intimacy between Ampère and Goethe. According to Sainte-Beuve, Ampère must have pleased the patriarch "both by his liveliness and enthusiasm, and because this enthusiasm, without smoke and fire, was relieved now and again by an epigram or a worldly joke. Mme. Récamier had formed and fashioned Ampère like this. Before he had known her he was impetuous, violent, passionate, irascible even—an enthusiast without any self-restraint. She had softened his asperities for him, and in their place had taught him good manners. She had, I fancy, taken some of his sacred fire from him, but in return had given him tact, good taste, and that sense of the ridiculous which, perhaps, only belongs to good society."⁸

On the 9th May, 1827, J. J. Ampère sent Mme. Récamier a

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 261.

² *Ibid.*, p. 260.

³ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 440.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 441.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 442.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 444.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, p. 445.

⁸ *Nouveaux Lundi*s, XIII, p. 211.

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very curious letter from Weimar about Goethe.¹ He spoke to her of the prodigious man, of his charm, of his curiosity, of his faculty of enthusiasm. "With his entirely white dressing-gown," he writes, "which makes him look like a big sheep, seated there with his son, his daughter-in-law, and his two little grandchildren, who play with him, talking about Schiller, about the works of both of them, of what the former wanted to do, of what he would have done with his own works, of his intentions, of his souvenirs, he is the most interesting and the most pleasant of men." J. J. Ampère depicted Goethe as "on his knees before Molière and La Fontaine," studying Tasso's history. He had read a fragment of the continuation of *Faust* in manuscript, and he saw in it "a dream of great meaning." But after all this praise he added: "You will think that I have caught the mania of admiration for Goethe from the Germans, but I have not yet arrived at the point at which the good lady is in whose house I am staying. She is enraptured because the abundance of the great man's thoughts is such that he is obliged to have a secretary! To have a secretary is unprecedented!"

The joke was a very slight one. When Mme. Récamier had read the letter she told it to the friends who came to the Abbaye. De Latouche asked to be allowed to take it to the *Globe*. Mme. Récamier "gave up the letter, which appeared almost as it was in the *Globe*, with scarcely anything omitted."² She wrote at once to Ampère to ask him whether he would "be pleased or vexed."³ Jean-Jacques was vexed. Although no offence was taken at Weimar, he was afraid of being compromised by it, and he sent the editor a long letter of rectification.⁴ He left Weimar at the end of May, after a final interview with Goethe which was very touching.⁵ He lamented in his letters to Mme. Récamier, and seemed to be sad. He accused her of having "spoiled his poor memories of Weimar."⁶ From Weimar, Ampère went to Sweden, after passing through

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 446 and following.

² Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 212.

³ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, pp. 263 and 264.

⁴ Sainte-Beuve, work quoted, pp. 213 and 214, note.

⁵ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 449 and following.

⁶ See Cuvillier-Fleury, *Posthumes et revenants*, p. 258.

Berlin. Later on he gave an account of his journey. He wrote Mme. Récamier his impressions of the different stages.¹ He visited the "mountains and waterfalls of Norway." "It is a great pleasure to me," he wrote to her from Drontheim on the 19th of August, 1827, "to be the first to send to you from the neighbourhood of the Laps and the polar circle, from some two hundred leagues north of St. Petersburg and Stockholm, a little letter to tell the Abbaye-aux-Bois how much more interesting I think it is, even with its ugly gate, than the Church of St. Oluf, the oldest in the North, where your friend General Bernadotte was crowned at the time of the Constitution."² In November, 1827, Jean-Jacques was in Bavaria,³ and a short time afterwards he was welcomed once more at the Abbaye.

Mlle. Cuvier died on the 28th of September, 1827.⁴ De Salvandy spoke at her grave. The memory of the young girl remained with Ampère "like a religion—we might say of remorse."⁵ André-Marie Ampère felt almost as much sorrow as his son at this misfortune. On the 2nd of August, 1827, Ballanche, writing to Mme. Récamier (who was then staying at the house of her friend Charles Lefebvre at the Brûlerie, near Montargis), said to her: "I have had a visit from Ampère. He confided to me confidentially the news of the proposed marriage of Mlle. Clémentine with an intelligent man who has money, and consequently has no need of any career. You can understand Ampère's trouble, and, added to that, he refrains from speaking of it. As I was not building my hopes on our young man in this respect as Ampère was, I fancy it will prove just a sorrow without any object. Anyhow, I sympathize with him with all my heart."⁶

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 462 and following. Ampère went to see Prince Augustus when in Berlin. The Prince wrote to Mme. R. on the 7th of June, 1827: "He has dined several times with me already. His conversation seemed interesting to me; he speaks German well, and likes our literature very much." Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² *Ibid.*, I, pp. 473-474.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 483.

⁴ Sainte-Beuve, article quoted, p. 198, note 1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 197 and 198.

⁶ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Compare *Lettres de la Duchesse de Broglie*, p. 154.

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J. J. Ampère was back in Paris in November, 1827.¹ The Abbaye receptions were still very popular. Through Delécluze, in the portion of his *Souvenirs* recently published, we have some anecdotes connected with this time. He writes, for instance, on the 8th March, 1827, as follows:² "After Delphine Gay they began to talk about her cousin, Mlle. Allard—'She is in Florence, she is living there.' 'Who was it who was talking to me about her?' said Ballanche, stroking his forehead. 'Ah,' he added, 'it was a great man.' 'M. Valery?' exclaimed X. 'Precisely,' answered Ballanche. 'Is she writing anything in Tuscany?' asked Mme. Salvage. 'Oh, I suppose she will have produced something,' answered Ballanche. At the word *produced*, Louise (Mme. Récamier) wanted to laugh, and I too, for it must be known that Mlle. Allard had had a child in Paris, and she is bringing it up and nursing it herself openly at Florence. As I have just said, she is nursing the child, and besides this receives people and is at work on a book about Machiavelli."

Chateaubriand's great anger, and the passionate discussions which his attitude provoked, must undoubtedly have disturbed the usually calm life of the Abbaye. Everyone knows what activity and what talent he employed in the service of his hatreds.³ When Hyde de Neuville, his personal friend, in May, 1827, was crossed off the list of serviceable ambassadors, he attacked the President of the Council before the Chamber of Peers with a violence that was very eloquent. After the re-establishment of the censorship he wrote, on the 30th of June, 1827, "that the Ministers were men who preferred themselves to their country."⁴ Villèle had been hooted at the review of the 29th April, and Chateaubriand, after the disbanding of the National Guard, declared that "it would be curious to get the army together, and to compromise the tranquillity of France, in order to make sure of the position of two or three Ministers and the pittance of the familiar friends of those Ministers."⁵ The newspapers took part in this terrible debate. The *Etoile* of March 18th,

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 483.

² See *Revue rétrospective*, XI, 1889, 2, p. 251 and following.

³ See G. Lanson, *La Défection de Chateaubriand*, in the *Revue de Paris*, August 1st, 1901.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 501.

⁵ *Ibid.*

1827, accused Chateaubriand of taking the great idea he had of his talents "for an evident sign of vocation for authority." The *Gazette de France* of January 1st, 1826, reproached him for "those noisy phrases, such as one admires when at college." *L'Ami de la Religion* attacked him in the same sense.¹ The fact was that Chateaubriand had never before gone so far. In a letter of October, 1825, he had said: "Whatever may be the fate reserved for France, I shall never depart from the three principles which are the basis of all my works: religion, liberty, and the legitimate throne. I am not a Republican, although I see very well that people are turning to the Republic through the incapacity of some and the superiority of others, and although my mind perfectly conceives that kind of popular liberty, unknown to the ancients, which comes to us necessarily through the improvement of society."² Even under this form the declaration was a bold one. It has been shown³ to what a degree Chateaubriand had become emboldened in his speeches or writings on the liberty of the press, in the various prefaces of the editions of his works which appeared from 1826 to 1828. "At the close of 1827 he would not consent to enter the Ministry, at least he first said so, without introducing there Royer-Collard, and it may be affirmed that he was not alarmed at Benjamin Constant and General Sébastiani."⁴ Mme. Récamier tried by all the means in her power to soften the effects of this great fury. She made use of Adrien de Montmorency's influence, who was then on leave of absence, and to whom the King listened. We have a proof of this in that somewhat mysterious letter from Adrien, which is not dated, but certainly belongs to this crisis: "I have reported very faithfully and scrupulously what you authorized me to say in the interest of one of your friends. I beseech you to believe that in this circumstance I remembered all that I owed to our old and unchangeable friendship of so many years' standing. That is all that I can say. The results you will learn. You

¹ See G. Lanson, *La Défection de Chateaubriand*, in the *Revue de Paris*, August 1st, 1901, p. 501.

² Quoted by Kerviler, *Bio-bibliogr.*, pp. 59 and 60.

³ Lanson, article quoted.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 520.

will understand that the most important of all my duties prevents me from explaining more fully.”¹ The Liberals, who were very numerous in Mme. Récamier’s *salon*, feted Chateaubriand, and Benjamin Constant, who was very active in 1827, took part in these homages.² At the same time, too, as he intended having a collection of his speeches published, he asked Juliette for her help in order to ensure the success of his book.

The Duchesse Mathieu de Montmorency, who was at Bonnetable, in the province of Sarthe, wanted to hear from Mme. Récamier about the famous review of April 29th, 1827, and its various consequences.

“Your friend, the great writer,” she says in her letter, “is terribly strong in his disapprobation, and your other friend, who as a rule is less ardent, was very intractable this time, as he broke away and left the King’s Council. I must own that when I heard of this resignation, quite alone here, my first idea was: Will not that be a great success among all the Liberals? Was I wrong, and dare I own it *in spite of your little leaning that way?*—Sosthène’s position, too, is rather disagreeable. What do you think about it? He ought not to keep a position which he cannot maintain with dignity, but with his taste for movement and affairs he ought not to give everything up unless it should be really necessary, for fear of regretting it afterwards. You will not give me any details, then, about your new acquaintance. It is nevertheless so important a thing, the care of the soul, that at least I may be permitted to beseech you to think of that before all things. . . .”³

The fall of the Villèle Ministry simplified Chateaubriand’s situation. It is well known how, at the November elections of 1827, the adversaries of the Ministry—the Liberals, the Left centre, and the party styled the *Défection*—banded together against it. The Chamber had a great majority of Opposi-

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection, dated only Sunday 25th.

² *Lettres de B. Constant à Mme. R.*, p. 329.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. It is not dated, but refers to the month of May, 1827.

tionists. The Villèle Ministry left office and Charles X had to resign himself to choosing Ministers in the Liberal Right centre. This was the Martignac Ministry.¹ M. de Villèle resigned on the 2nd of December, 1827; the decrees appointing the new Ministry appeared in the *Moniteur* on the 5th of January, 1828. Charles X would not have Chateaubriand on the list,² but the Comte de la Ferronnays was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs. After some negotiation it was agreed that Chateaubriand should go as Ambassador to Rome in the place of the Duc de Laval-Montmorency, who was to be transferred to Vienna.³ "I consented therefore to go away again," he wrote. "This time at least I was pleased about the exile. I felt a wish to settle down."

On the 5th of August, 1828, the Duchesse de Montmorency wrote to Mme. Récamier as follows:⁴

"What about the plans and moves of your friends, the Ambassadors? And your own, too, which interest me much more? Are you really thinking of going to Marseilles and still farther? Wait at least before deciding until M. de Ch. has started for Rome. I fancy that in the end he will stay where he is. Bad people say that he has already spent all the money destined for his establishment in Italy, and that this is one of the reasons why he no longer wants to go there. My mother, who remains faithful to her old attachment to M. de Villèle, does not know anything new. She is satisfied with reading the *Gazette de France* with interest, and she enjoys its fine arguments. According to my way of thinking, they are rather too late. If its chief had thought thus and had acted accordingly, I am persuaded that, supported by the true Royalists and by religious people, he would (I beg your pardon) have prevented your friends the Liberals from reigning, and we should have had veritable peace. But I am

¹ Compare Seignobos, *Hist. polit. de l'Europe contemporaine*, p. 114.

² *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 356.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 360 and 361.

⁴ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. About Mme. R.'s receptions in 1828, see Dégérando, *Lettres inédites*, p. 27. About the fête organized for the installation of Gérard's *Sainte-Thérèse* at the Infirmary of the Rue d'Enfer see *Corresp. de Fr. Gérard*, pp. 368, 369, 370.

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forgetting to whom I am writing, or rather I like making my remarks to you beforehand."

Mme. Récamier must have been glad to see a solution arrive which put nearly all her friends in harmony with each other. As to Chateaubriand, after a bout of courtesy with the Duc de Laval, he set out for Rome on the 14th of September, 1828.

CHAPTER XX

CHATEAUBRIAND AMBASSADOR TO ROME (SEPTEMBER 1828—MAY 1829.)

The authentic text of the letters to Mme. Récamier; the gaps in the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*.—Chateaubriand's preoccupations and intrigues.—The Prudence of the *Enchantements*.—The Comtesse del Drago.—The Marquise de V.—Mme. de Cottens—Adrien de Montmorency at Vienna.—Chateaubriand's return to Paris (May 27th, 1829.)

WHEN Prince Augustus of Prussia heard that Chateaubriand was about to start for Rome, he wrote as follows to Mme. Récamier from Berlin, on the 23rd of August, 1828: “M. de Chateaubriand's appointment to the Embassy of Rome must have caused you *much* pain. I was surprised that he accepted, but still more surprised that this post should have been offered to him, his works having been forbidden in Rome.”¹ Augustus of Prussia knew, and from Mme. Récamier herself, that Chateaubriand was her *consoler*.² She had forgiven the great charmer all she had against him, and she continued to love him with an affection that was less passionate, perhaps, but just as sincere and profound.

M. Bernard died in 1828.³ In the summer of the same year, Charles Lenormant started for Egypt with Champollion.⁴ Mme. Récamier remained in Paris, rather more sad and lonely still than in the past. Chateaubriand was more and more attentive to her. In the account he has left of his embassy

¹ Unpublished letter, No. 99 of the series in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² According to the Prince's unpublished letter, April 22nd, 1827, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. ³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 219.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 223, and Wallon's notice on Charles Lenormant, from p. 9 to p. 18.

to Rome he declares that it is in his letters to Mme. Récamier that he has "left the history of his secret feelings and of his private life during that period."¹ We shall soon see what to think about the sincerity of this declaration. Anyhow, to judge only by appearances, Chateaubriand had never been more eager to have his faults and his ingratitude forgiven.

Mme. Lenormant tells us rightly that from the 14th of September, 1828, to the 27th of May, 1829, all Mme. Récamier's interest was concentrated in her correspondence with Chateaubriand, and she has given us "almost without interruption," as she says, the series of letters from the absent Ambassador.² This collection of documents was too important for us not to feel it our duty to see the originals themselves³ before putting any interpretation on them, and noting anything that might have escaped the attention of the first publisher of them.

Thus the end of the first letter, after the wonderful phrase about the ruins of Rome, reads as follows: "Good morning, my beautiful angel. Watch over me. Ballanche gave me great pleasure. He had seen you, and he brought me something from you. Do not cry any more. Good-bye until this evening. Now I think of it, write me a line to Lausanne, there where I shall find memories of you, and then to Milan. You must pay the letters beforehand. Hyacinthe will see you. He will bring me news of you to-morrow to Villeneuve. He put my letter to M. Mitchel in the post without thinking. Tell Mme. de Boigne that her *protégé* must have received the papers he asks for six weeks ago, and that he sent for them himself. How wretched to have to write you this. A thousand nice messages to my angel."

"Do not cry any more." These words should be noted, for they explain why Chateaubriand's letters at first follow each other so quickly. The letter from Fontainebleau, which is so touching, was written on Sunday evening, and a postscript is added on Monday morning: "I am just awake and, as you see, my first thought is of you. We are leaving. Until this

¹ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 2.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II. p. 223 and following.

³ They are in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Letters from Chateaubriand, Vol. I, from No. 57.

evening, then, at Villeneuve.¹ In the next one there is another postscript, still more touching : "Tuesday morning, 16. Here is Hyacinthe with your little note. Do not cry, I implore you. You see that I love you, there is nothing to be done ; what is to become of us ? I shall write to you to-morrow evening from Dijon."² Whilst lavishing on Mme. Récamier the most ardent assurances of affection, Chateaubriand tells her what to do in order to let him have news from her. To his letter of Tuesday the 23rd, he adds : "It is to Rome now that you must write. Reckon carefully. I can scarcely be there before the 10th of next month, and it will take ten days for your letter to arrive. Henry might take it and see that it is sent me through the Foreign Office."³

Juliette had promised distinctly to go to Rome, in order to be with this friend who was so depressed by solitude. He reminds her energetically of this promise. He was doomed to expiate cruelly, by his profound sadness, the grief he had caused Mme. Récamier a few years previously. He owned this, and endeavoured to make up for his fault.⁴ Juliette, according to her custom, wrote very little. Chateaubriand arrived at Rome about the 10th of October, and in his letter of the 23rd the phrase we might have expected appears : "Try to get me recalled."⁵ The couriers left Rome three times a week,⁶ and he never missed sending by each one his lamentations and entreaties to the Abbaye-aux-Bois.⁷

Mme. Récamier had been entrusted with the *Moïse* affair for which Taylor had asked.⁸ Chateaubriand kept her very exactly informed about all his diplomatic affairs, as the following letter proves. It belongs to those which have already been published by Mme. Lenormant.

"ROME, November 4th, 1828."

"I have just left St. Louis. For the first time I found myself in this church, opposite a tomb, the Pope on his

¹ Unpublished letter, No. 58.

² Unpublished letter, No. 59. On the 29th September, from Milan, Chateaubriand sends an affectionate little note to the Marquise de V.

³ Unpublished letter, No. 62.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 236. ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 242. ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁷ Compare the two letters to the Marquise de V., October 11th and 21st.

⁸ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 236, 240, 242, 248, 250, 258, and following.



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knees and me on my knees by the side of the Pope, representing the King of France and praying before a picture of St. Louis. What a strange sequel to my life, and what an end to a public career. I have scarcely time to write these few words, as the courier is leaving. No letters from you still. It is deadly, and I can assure you that I am almost discouraged. Send to the Foreign Office, as I am writing you three times a week through this intermediary.”¹

One wonders what M. de Chateaubriand really wanted, since even at this moment when he was being feted and applauded he still complained of not being “made more use of” for his country.² Anyhow, every letter which arrived from Juliette brought him a little respite and appeasement. He replied in detail to all that his correspondent asked him. “You must have been,” he writes,³ “overwhelmed by my *three letters a week* and I hope that you are now deeply repenting. I feel inclined to let Taylor do as he likes. The opportunity is admirable and will not occur again. If we are a *failure*, it is not my fault. Like Lord Byron, absent, I wash my hands of my piece; if we should succeed, an extra success never does any harm. Wait for political silence? When shall we have that? Events are all linked to each other and drag us along with them. Arrange all this, then. Send for Taylor if he has not been. The money can be had from M. Hérard, my banker.

“We know the news about the poor sister. Mme. de Ch. is very anxious and unhappy about it. Besides her fondness for the sister, she fears that her death may disorganize the infirmary, so that it may be closed. Send your letters now to the Foreign Office. I have arranged about the correspondence. M. Denoys is seeing to it, and I am to have an extra courier every week. Instead of waiting twelve and thirteen days for your letters, they will arrive on the eighth. You tell me to speak of you to such and such a person. I have spoken of you to everybody, and only yesterday evening to Visconti.

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. Letters from Chateaubriand, Vol. I, No. 78.

² *Souv. et Cour.*, II, p. 253.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 256 and 257.

I tell them you are coming for Easter, and everyone is delighted. Shall you come or shall I go? I would rather go.

"I have given orders to M. Hérard, banker, Rue St. Honoré 372, to pay fifteen thousand francs to M. Taylor if he should ask him for this sum, either for me or for you. I have given your name and address."

Chateaubriand heard on the 8th of November that M. de la Ferronnays had taken office again.¹ He saw his predictions accomplished with regard to war in the East. "That poor Greece," he said, "will at last be free."² But the good news he might receive from Morea or elsewhere did not calm his impatience nor soothe his weariness. His excursions in the neighbourhood of Rome were his greatest diversion, and the arrival of the French courier his principal preoccupation.

"Yesterday," he writes on the 18th of November,³ "I walked for two hours in the country. I went towards France, where all my thoughts are. I dictated a few words to Hyacinthe, who took them down in pencil as he walked. But I am scarcely in a mood for writing. I have a continual headache, and my mind is too much taken up with regret. I shall not be myself again until I am with you. It is two o'clock, and the courier has not arrived. This is odious. I am going to finish my letter. Until Thursday, then, the 20th. Mme. S. came yesterday evening to see us.⁴ She is very singular."⁵

Mme. Récamier's letters were full of recommendations, and her counsel must have been on subjects of a delicate nature, as Chateaubriand replies to his friend on the 20th of November as follows: "Do not fear anything. I am case-hardened."⁶ We must say, though, that to the honour of his friendship, during his stay in Rome his regularity in writing was perfect. This time truly he did not break his word. He seemed from

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 254, *M.O.T.*, V, p. 63.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 260.

³ Compare the letter of the 15th to the Marquise de V. with the letter of the 5th of November to Mme. R. *M.O.T.*, V pp. 64-65.

⁴ Mme. Salvage.

⁵ No. 87, Vol. I, of the letters from Chateaubriand in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. This letter is published in part in *Souv. et Corr.*, 262.

⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 263. The same day he wrote a very tender letter to the Marquise de V.

this time forth quite determined to end his political career.¹ The compliments Mme. Récamier paid him about his fidelity led him more and more to wish to return.² There was also his *Moïse*, about which he was thinking a great deal.³ Some days, as on the 2nd of December,⁴ he wrote twice to his "beautiful angel," by the regular courier and by the extra one. It is true that just at this time it happened that he received three letters at once from the Abbaye, and that this was something approaching a miracle.⁵ Mme. Récamier, besides her teasing, gave him in these letters the opinion of competent judges with regard to the *Moïse* venture. On the 21st of November, she told him that it had been read in her *salon*,⁶ and she must certainly have communicated to him the reserves made by certain friends. Chateaubriand had decided, though, not to be deterred by anything. "Do not listen to anyone," he answered her. "I have made up my mind absolutely; the crown of Sophocles on my white hair would not suit me badly."⁷ Or again, "I am firm on the subject of *Moïse*."⁸

It would be surprising, if we did not know Chateaubriand, to see him so persistent in this literary venture, in which his perspicacity might have made him foresee a lamentable failure after so many triumphs. When he speaks of his *Moïse* he takes a sharp tone, and it is as though his political reflections, which are not usually very kindly ones, get more bitter still under the action of an author's wounded vanity. As an instance of this, we must read his letter of the 27th of December to Mme. Récamier just as he wrote it. Mme. Lenormant takes away something of its character by shortening it.⁹

"Six hours after the departure of the courier of last Thursday, the 25th, a special courier at last brought me a

¹ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 266.

² "You are satisfied with me." *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 269.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 268-274.

⁴ See his letter of the same day to Barante. *Sour. du baron de Barante*, III, pp. 471 and 472.

⁵ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 273.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 274.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁹ No. 106 of the letters from Chateaubriand, Vol. I, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Compare *Sour. et Corr.*, II, pp. 289 and 290.

short letter from you dated the 16th. This very short letter is all you deign to grant me in reply to a dozen long letters from me. It is no doubt more than I deserve ; but when one is so far away, kind, long letters would do one so much good. This letter of the 16th tells me two things : that Villemain came to talk to you about *Moïse*, and that M. P.¹ wishes to be Minister. I suppose the former came to see you in the name of all these *kind* friends to express the most intense fear, moved by the most affectionate interest in me, about *Moïse* : no actors, probable failure, impropriety, etc. And all this because the piece is at bottom *detestable*, which they do not tell you, as they want *to spare you*. Take no notice. Success always hurts our best friends, and it will be our innocent revenge if we succeed. If we fail, it does not much matter. I should not be in the least distressed. Lord Byron consoled himself in Italy for having been hissed in London, and yet he was a poet. And I, being a wretched prose writer, what have I to lose ? We will go on, then, fearlessly ; or not let yourself be influenced. You must now have the fifteen thousand francs from Hérard. But you always say that you are going to tell me about *Moïse*, and you tell me nothing about it. Has Taylor gone ? Is his successor as eager as he was ? Are the *rôles* given out ? Is the music being arranged ? When will the piece be played ?

" You seem to want to reassure me about the Pasquier Ministry. You judge me wrongly. You perhaps think I am not sincere in my wish to give everything up and to end my days in some out-of-the-way home. You are wrong. Now, in this disposition of mind I should bless the arrival of M. P. to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as it would open me a door for getting away from here. I have declared a thousand times that I could only remain as Ambassador as long as my friend La Ferronnays was Minister. I should at once send in my resignation with extreme delight and wish M. Pasquier success."²

But Pasquier, Barante, Villemain wrote direct to the Am-

¹ Pasquier.

² The *Bulletin Charaway*, No. 32,646, mentions two letters from Mme. R. to Taylor (May 26th and July 12th, 1829).

bassador, in whom the author always predominated over the politician. The two Bertins, more particularly, beseeched him not to have *Moïse* put on.¹ At the end of December Chateaubriand gave way, and asked Mme. Récamier to withdraw *Moïse*, to pay all the expenses incurred, and to stop the distribution of the *rôles* and the rehearsals. But he resigned himself to this most ungraciously and abused his friends accordingly. "This is the conclusion of the whole thing, then," he wrote to Mme. Récamier.² "Withdraw *Moïse*, and tell all my friends not to think of me for a Ministry. My opinion, too, is that the present Ministry will hold out, and that there will be a large majority in the Chambers. One truth remains amidst all this, and that is that I love you above all, and that all my life is reduced to this one sentiment."

Mme. Récamier was thus freed from a very heavy responsibility, even if Chateaubriand did suffer a keen disappointment.³ Once more he took refuge in his affection for his divine friend. As a matter of fact, she had conducted this *Moïse* affair with a wise authority greatly to her credit. She had induced Chateaubriand to act in the interest of his glory. It was a thankless task for her, as never was any author more susceptible. "The sacrifice is made," he said, "but I shall never forgive my kind *friends* for it."⁴ These pleasant speeches referred to men like Bertin, Barante, and Villemain. With Mme. Récamier, though, he gradually calmed down. "I have one last regret," he writes to her, "as far as *Moïse* is concerned. When I know you have it back safely in your own hands I will never speak of it again."⁵

There was soon another business affair about which Chateaubriand had recourse to Mme. Récamier. The publisher Ladvocat was threatened with bankruptcy. Chateaubriand gave

¹ See *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 290.

² Unpublished passage from letter No. 107. It should be inserted after the words, "It is heaven opened for them." *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 291. See with reference to the *Moïse* affair, J. Lemoinne's excellent reflections in the *Débats*, November 24th, 1859.

³ See his bitter letter of the 30th of December, *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 292. On the 31st of December he wrote a rather sad letter to his "sister," Mme. de V.

⁴ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 298.

⁵ Unpublished passage of letter No. 112, January 3rd, 1829.

his instructions to his Paris ambassadress. "You will find enclosed," he says, in a long epistle dated January 12th, 1829,¹ "a letter from M. Pourrat to me, and my reply to M. Pourrat. When you have read these letters, send for Bertin, who is arbitrator with M. de Barante in all the Ladvocat business. Bertin will read these letters, so that he may know how I stand with Ladvocat. There is nothing for him to say or do until I have received the reply that Pourrat cannot fail to send me. (Pourrat is the banker who has lent money to Ladvocat.) But it is better for Bertin, and for M. de Barante if necessary, to know everything, lest things should come to a rupture. The essential in the first place is to keep it all quiet." The instructions were certainly somewhat complicated.

When his private affairs allowed him a little respite, Chateaubriand meditated on the fate of empires. Rome was a fine theatre for this kind of meditation. "I see," he writes,² "the mingled ruins of the Roman Republic and the Empire of Tiberius; what is all that now in the same dust? Does not the Capuchin friar, in sweeping that dust with his skirt,³ as he passes by seem to render still more obvious the vanity of so many vanities?"

In France the different parties were getting agitated. Mme. Récamier, in a letter dated January 5th, transmitted to Chateaubriand the advice to get a leave of absence in order to return and look after his political interests. The Ambassador at Rome, however, claimed, not without pride, to have accepted his present post "for the love of peace and to give the majority to the Ministry during difficult times."⁴ He therefore persisted in affirming that if M. de la Ferronnays should no longer be Minister he should retire with this friend. "The question of his successor has nothing to do with me," he wrote to Mme. Récamier; "whether it be M. Pasquier, M. de Rayneval, or M. de Mortemart matters little. I withdraw. I might, if absolutely necessary, have

¹ No. 117. Unpublished passage.

² January 15th, No. 119. Published in *M.O.T.*, V, pp. 119-120.

³ Mme. Lenormant in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 310, omits *with his skirt*, which takes away the character of the phrase.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 313.

remained with M. de Polignac, because this is a man whose political career I made, but he has no chance in the present state of things and progress of opinion.¹ I shall withdraw quietly and without any fuss." The Morea vicissitude was the despair of Chateaubriand. "Poor Greece," he wrote; "what a failure!² What millions spent for nothing! Ah, if I were still in the Opposition!"

M. de la Ferronnays was ill; he took a holiday in January for three months, and his office was given to M. Portalis in the interim.³ Chateaubriand had three months for reflection and for preparing his future. Mme. Récamier was always his mouthpiece in Paris. He wrote to her as follows on the 27th of January, 1829:⁴

"I have had such a bad night that this morning I have scarcely strength enough to write. It is my rheumatism which is increased by this climate, and which has gone to my head and stomach. Agree that I am quite right in thinking of resigning. I am more and more confirmed in this idea after reading the papers. Before my poor friend La Ferronnays was ill he was no doubt esteemed, but people were not enthusiastic about him. At present he is the greatest Minister the sun has ever shone upon. Let him get well again, and he will become once more a Minister on the same level as the colleagues who are treated so severely. As for me, I have not been regretted at all; they want me a little to-day, not too much, though, since there is a possibility of my coming back. Ill-will and envy are already beginning to pierce through what remains of the consideration and the confusion of praises that were given to me formerly, when I was fighting for a cause which would have been lost but for me. It seems to me that with the present generation it is impossible to arrive at any reason, at any justice; even that of the *Globe* has spoilt certain good qualities by an arrogance which clouds its good sense. The generations called on to the

¹ Letter No. 122, of January 20th. Mme. Lenormant (p. 313) is to blame for omitting this phrase, which is really curious.

² Mme. Lenormant omits these words. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 317.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 318.

⁴ No. 126. This letter was not published by Mme. Lenormant, and in the *M.O.T.* Chateaubriand has omitted it.

world's stage a quarter of a century later will be conscientiously educated to liberty, without anger, party hatred, and personal antipathies. As for us, we must content ourselves with transmitting to them this liberty, whilst hating each other now and running each other down, or exaggerating all blame and all praise.

"Some one writes to me that opinion is without a guide. I see very well that it is. Not a word is said in the papers of what ought to be said, either by the Opposition or the Ministerial side. The latter, nevertheless, has taken advantage of the fault. 'If M. de la Ferronnays is so capable,' it says, 'if you regret him so much, wait until he gets better, and do not cry out so much against the interim.' The retort is just. I think the *interim* will go on satisfactorily. I fancy that all the factions of the Chambers, fearing to have Ministers they would not like, will settle to wait. After three months' absence, three more months will be added. The session will come to an end, and time will have been gained. Foreign events will have happened, etc. But what am I saying? The opening of the Chambers takes place to-day even. You are interested in the King's speech and not in the old politics with which I am occupied, quite alone here in this corner of the earth.

"I do not want to hear anything more of *Moïse*, for this year at any rate. If you have received the money, keep it, and do not give it to Taylor, who would use it for other things. We will see about it next winter. If I am alive, I shall be hissed. If I have gone to God, I shall perhaps get some applause, and in fifty years from now you will come and tell me about my last successes, at which I was not present. Good-bye till Thursday and every day of my sad life."

In January, then, politics are the chief subject in Chateaubriand's letters to Mme. Récamier. When writing these letters he makes and remakes an examination of his conscience. Weariness wins the day over ambition. He was ill, though, at this time, or at any rate very tired.

In his letter of the 29th,¹ he says: "I intend sending Givré

¹ On the 27th of January he wrote as follows to Mme. de V.: "It is during the spring that I shall have a leave of absence, and it is this year 1829 that I am going to see you. Remember that!"

to Paris at the beginning of Lent to fetch my leave of absence for Easter. Easter is the 19th of April. I shall either make use of it or not, according to circumstances and according to what we have arranged together.¹ If I suffer so much already from the climate during the winter, what will it be when the sun appears again?

In letter after letter his discouragement becomes more and more evident. The thought of his *Moïse* keeps coming back to him and distressing him.

"I do not know," he writes, "whether it would not be better for me to give up France for ever and bury myself here till the end of my life. It is probable that they would be delighted to leave me here as long as I liked. But for that it would be necessary that M. de la Ferronnays were back in office, and that is the difficulty. Before deciding and making any arrangements let us wait a little longer. Besides, one result or the other is clear: if I stay, you will come here; if I return to France, you will await me either in Rome or Paris, and my life will always be consecrated to you. For the last time, either take back *Moïse* or let it be held over indefinitely, and do not give any money to Taylor.² I have had a letter from Ladvocat, who tells me that his affairs are more flourishing than ever."

Before the letter about *Torre Vergata*, which was published by Chateaubriand and afterwards by Mme. Lenormant, we have come across two others which are well worth preserving.

"ROME, Feb. 1st, 1829.³

"I hear that a special courier is to leave for Paris, and here I am, quickly at work—that is, writing to you. I wrote you a long letter nevertheless, yesterday, for the usual courier. You do not take such advantages of opportunities. Very different from you, I never have a cold or any suffering which could hinder my telling you how memories of you haunt me all the

¹ Unpublished passage of letter No. 127. See *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 321.

² Unpublished letter of January 31st, No. 128. Compare *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 322. The original of this letter contains another passage that has never been published, but of no great importance.

³ No. 131 of the collection.

time, and in these letters, which weary you, I find a charm which makes me forget my exile for a moment. The attack on the *interim* has come much more promptly than I expected. I conclude from it that, for people to have thought again of M. de Mortemart, and even (which is scarcely credible) of M. de Polignac, the news about M. de la Ferronnays cannot be good. If his disease should be declared incurable, the Gordian knot would be severed for me. I should retire, and we should go back to the Rue d'Enfer and *Moïse*; there would not be any great harm in that. I thought at first that a patched-up Ministry might go on, but I now think, seeing the movement that has manifested itself, that if M. de la Ferronnays should retire, the Ministry would be renewed within a very short time. If it should be composed of my friends, I shall obtain peace and justice from them.

" You are not seriously thinking of the folly of a journey to Greece?¹ Excavations, but where? Athens is in the hands of the Turks, and in the whole Peloponnesus there is only Olympia which offers any chance. Then, too, the monuments of Olympia were nearly all of bronze, and it is well known that the Goths melted them down on their second invasion of Greece. Finally, when the expedition returns, it will scarcely have left those unhappy shores when they will be infested by brigands or the Turks will be back again.

" If I stay in Rome, you will come here, and then we will go in for excavations that would be more certain. Tuesday—that is, the day after to-morrow—I am going to make the first attempt in a little corner here. How lucky if I could unearth a master-piece and give to the earth in exchange my weary bones, which no one, unless it were you, would be tempted to look for! Come now, write to me; that is all which remains to me in life. On Tuesday, by the regular courier, I shall start again as though I had written nothing to-day. Yours ever."

¹ The passage which follows, as far as the word *Greece*, is given wrongly as being in another letter, by Mme. Lenormant. *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 236.

"ROME, Tuesday, February 3rd, 1829.¹

" You say in your little note of January 20th, that my friends will have told me, and you repeat this same phrase two or three times. What do you mean by this? Where are my friends? I have answered four or five persons who do not write to me usually, and who wrote to me, I do not know exactly why, when there was a question of *Moïse* and the Ministry. They have not written again, so that our correspondence has stopped at that. Mme. [the name is illegible] has written to me three times about a box that she had sent to Rome, intending to come herself. She talked politics. I did not enter into any details, contenting myself with saying, as I have said to everyone, that if M. de la Ferronnays goes I shall go, and that besides I am ill, old, tired, and only longing for rest. I write long letters three times a week to you, and you answer by a few lines once a month, so that you have no reason to be jealous of my friends.

" Now then, let us come to M. de Polignac. I cannot imagine where your intelligence is in Paris, nor how you could think that M. de Polignac could for a moment be called to the Ministry. The entrance of M. de P. to the Council, in present circumstances, would be nothing less than a kind of revolution. The Chamber of Deputies would have to be dissolved, etc. It is not worth talking about, nor yet wasting my paper, to show you the absurdity of such a rumour. It proves one thing, though, and that is that M. de la Ferronnays is not well, and that probably he will not remain in office. Let us await the *dénouement* which is not far off. My path is easy and entirely traced out. I shall leave with my friend. What could be more simple and clear? What does the rest matter to me or to you?

" Fine weather is beginning again here; February is a short month, Easter will soon be here, and I shall see you again. Either you will come here or, what is much more probable, I shall go in search of you. The slight incertitude which still remains on this point depends on the events of the session, which neither you nor I can absolutely foresee. Therefore, when M.

¹ No. 130 of the MSS.

Lenormant goes to Greece, supposing that we should want our Ambassador to return to Constantinople to treat with the Porte about the definitive emancipation of Morea, I think you would do well to stay peaceably in Paris, if by any means you attach any value on seeing me again for the rest of life. Good-bye until Thursday."

The death of Pope Leo XII, on the 10th of February, modified and at the same time simplified Chateaubriand's rôle in Rome. "It is an immense loss," he wrote to Mme. Récamier the same day, "that of this pontifical sovereign, for men who are moderate in their politics. The Congregation will be delighted."¹ Chateaubriand had from henceforth a great mission to fulfil. Mme. Récamier was commissioned to ask Bertin for a eulogy of the Pope.² The correspondence became more animated between the Abbaye-aux-Bois and the Ambassador. "I wrote to you," he says on the 12th of February, "by the mounted courier who was taking to Lyons the telegraphic news of the Pope's death. I wrote to you by M. de Montebello, who left a few hours after this courier. All this was on Tuesday during the day. I wrote you yesterday (Wednesday) another long letter which I do not want to send by the regular courier, so I will give it to a special courier I am sending in two or three days to Paris.³ To-day I only want to repeat that, as the Conclave will most probably have finished its elections before Easter, nothing is changed in my movements and nothing for your projects."

In this solemn circumstance Chateaubriand informs his friend of all the steps he takes and of all his actions. On the 12th of February, for instance, he says: "I have written to give particulars at any rate about the Archbishop of Toulouse. A little, old, fanatical libertine, who only believes in God in a half and half way."⁴ The long letter

¹ Mme. Lenormant (II, p. 328) omits this last phrase. The letter of February 7th, No. 135 of the collection, has been thoroughly modified by Mme. Lenormant (II, p. 326), who omits one passage, and on the other hand adds an extract from another letter. See above.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 330.

³ The whole of the beginning of this letter, No. 138, has never been published. Compare *M.O.T.*, V, p. 128 and following.

⁴ Letter No. 138. Mme. Lenormant (II, p. 332) omits this last phrase, and Chateaubriand does also. *M.O.T.*, V, p. 130.

of February 17th is too important as a document in the history of the intercourse between Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier for us not to give it in its true text.¹ Mme. Lenormant, in order to curtail a work which was already too voluminous, has considerably abridged it. It is as follows in the original :²

“Observe that³ they have already been taken in about my Embassy to Rome. They hoped certainly that I should do nothing here, that I should not succeed in anything, that the Government would not like me; and behold, the Pope and the Minister of State took a fancy to me and did all that I asked, and this so publicly and so distinctly that it was not possible even for enemies to deny it. On the other hand, my despatches, which I made out carefully and wrote myself, by way of worrying them, must have embarrassed my adversaries in the Council. If only you knew what these despatches usually are, and how easy it is to do better than all that! How could it be said, then, that I was doing nothing? I fancy, though, that these despatches, and above all my memoir on *Eastern affairs*, instead of being useful to me, excited the jealousy of Portalis and of Martignac, and were not understood *higher up*. I doubt even whether the *memoir* was read at the Council. It arrived at the wrong moment, just at the time of de la Ferronnays’ accident; and if it should be true that the latter indicated M. de Mortemart as his successor, I should not think much of the loyalty of this very loyal Minister.

“All that, in reality, matters very little to me, as I am only longing to retire, and have not a shadow of ambition. I am more than ever disgusted with affairs, from what I read in the papers. This enthusiasm for Mahmoud, this admiration for Martignac’s speech, which is mere exaggeration, make me despair of my country’s reason. It is evident, though, that this speech will give the Ministers a longer life: they will go on feebly with the *interim*, the time will be extended for La Ferronnays, and the end of the session will be reached

¹ On the 17th of February Chateaubriand also wrote to the Marquise de V. ² No. 140 of the MSS.

³ All the beginning of the letter as far as *public consideration* is the same as in Mme. Lenormant’s. *Sour. et Corr.*, II, pp. 333 and 334.

in this way. Your letter of February 3rd tells me that everyone wants me, but I do not want anyone but you.

"I am overwhelmed with despatches and affairs. The special courier who will bring you this letter is the third I have sent to France within a week. I do not know whether my telegraphic despatch from Lyons will arrive first. I am afraid that the courier from Sardinia started a few hours before mine, and that M. de la Tour du Pin will have taken advantage of it. I am sending you the speech that I shall make to-morrow, according to the custom here, before the Cardinals. It is *bold*; I made it for *Italy*. Do not show it or give it to anyone until after it appears in the *Diario Romano*, if it appears there. I will keep you posted with all that. If it should be put in the Roman paper, then you can have some copies made from the text I am sending you and have them distributed to the chief Paris papers, in order to avoid a *translation* of a bad *Italian translation*. It was in this way that my little letter for Tasso's monument was mutilated. I do not tell you a quarter of my private torments. Mme. de Ch. is more stormy than ever. To-day I am in the midst of scenes with the servants, and all that in the midst of my despatches, the Pope's death, and the political agitations of Paris!

"I was present at the first funeral ceremony for the Pope at St. Peter's. It was a strange mixture of indecency and grandeur. The blows of a hammer nailing up a Pope's coffin, interrupted chanting, the mixture of torchlight and moonlight, the coffin finally lifted up by a pulley and hanging in the dark to be deposited over a door in the sarcophagus of Pius VII, whose ashes made way for those of Leo XII. Can you imagine all this and the ideas that such a scene evoked?

"Take advantage, I beseech you, of all the couriers that are sent to me. Ah, when shall I see you, when shall I meet you again? How weary I am of this absence and of this life! I do not say anything more about *Moïse*; it is quite safe in your hands. I still hope that your niece's journey will not take place. What things will now be said about the poor Pope, who was so fond of me; and how my name will come

forward again, with reference to another subject and about such an unexpected thing !

" I wish you would send for Bertin and read him the first part of this letter. He ought to know what I think, and I have not time to write him in detail."¹ This letter to Mme. Récamier is eleven pages long in the original, and yet the next day, February 18th, Chateaubriand sends his friend another long message.² " I have exhausted everything," he says to her, with his incomparable grace, " except one thing that is inexhaustible—my affection for you."

The opening of the Conclave took place in the evening of the 23rd.³ Chateaubriand comments eloquently on the event.

Sometimes details of a private nature are to be found in this correspondence in which historical information holds so large a place. The last page, added hastily to the letter of February 28th, is an example of this :

" I have just received your letter of the 14th. You see that you were quite wrong in fearing a rival knowing more of *my secrets and my heart*. But we are no longer at that stage, and we have advanced since all that tittle-tattle. Hérard writes me that you asked him for 10,000 francs on the 10th of this month ; you do not say a word to me about it in your letter of the 14th. Taylor had evidently gone to some expense and you did not dare to tell me ? I have one hope, and that is that you required this sum for yourself and that you took it. Thank you for this, provided it has not been for your niece's foolish journey. The French papers of the 18th at last announce the news of the Pope's death, but without reflection. It appears that the Government would not give my telegraphic despatch which it received on the 15th."⁴

It is to be hoped, for the honour of Chateaubriand and in the interest even of Mme. Récamier's name, since it would gain

¹ Theremainderof this letter is very much like the text published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 335.

² Unpublished, No. 144 of the collection, four pages.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 337. All the letters published by Mme. Lenormant should be seen in the original. We cannot indicate here all the variations we have found in them. Thus p. 340 it was a letter written on the 28th of February which commenced : " I am waiting from one hour to another."

⁴ No. 149 of the collection.

lustre from it, that a critical edition of this correspondence may some day appear. By comparison with the originals it would be seen what the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* have told and what Mme. Lenormant thought proper to divulge. There would be in this work pretext for more than one lesson.

In a biography of Mme. Récamier, even though it be a detailed one, we could not give this valuable series of documents in its entire text. We cannot quote, for instance, the whole of that letter of March 3rd,¹ which the *Souvenirs et Correspondance* sets aside, in which Chateaubriand comments on the articles in the papers on the death of the Pope.

"The *Courrier*," he says, "had a foolish article which was quite unworthy of it. I could not help laughing at that poor D—. What a *Curtius*! As to the *abyss*, it is one no doubt for him, but a haven of safety for France. These old people are in their second childhood; it is true that from henceforth everything will go on without them. They are put outside the *laws* of the new world, and they will not believe that they are absolutely useless. May they rest in peace for the remainder of their days! No one wishes them any harm, and the whole system of M. de Maistre, revived by the Abbé de La Mennais, only amuses wise people now without angering them."

This correspondence is so rich that, between the letter of March 5th and that of March 12th, published by Mme. Lenormant,² there are in the originals three others of the 6th, 7th, and 10th. In the first one the Ambassador judges the French Cardinals very severely.

"The French Cardinals who are arriving," he says, "may ruin all.³ They are *enemies* and *Jesuits*. I do not know how I am going to extricate myself from all the intrigues which surround me. Besides all this, if I am to judge by the *confidential* and *official letters* of Portalis, if I have a Pope who is moderate in his views it is probable that I shall get back the office of Foreign Affairs, in case La Ferronnays does not

¹ No. 150 of the collection.

² *Sour. et Corr.*, I, p. 340 and following.

³ No. 153 of the collection.

take it again. Pray that the French Cardinals may be stopped a long time on Mont Cenis. What weakness on the part of the Government to let men start whom it knows to be its enemies! The greatest piece of good fortune would be that the Pope might be elected before their arrival. That is what I am working for with all my strength, but I doubt about succeeding. Tell Bertin, too, that I am pleased with the article, although, taking everything into consideration, it might have been better for the *particular* circumstance in which I find myself."

Mme. Récamier, then, was the intermediary between Chateaubriand and the *Journal des Débats*. She too began to write very often. Chateaubriand acknowledges the receipt of two letters on the same day, the one dated the 22nd and the other the 23rd of February.¹ At the same time he emphasizes afresh the difficulty of his task. "My position, I assure you," he says, "is one of the most delicate and difficult ones. You tell me that if I come out of it to my honour I shall have all the more glory. Alas! glory—I would let it go cheaply in exchange for a little rest."²

The letter of March 10th³ is more confident. "I think I have won the battle for the benefit of the King, the peace of France and of the world. It was a question of thoroughly persuading the enemies of our country that the French Cardinals were not coming with views contrary to the instructions I had received." It finishes with the same instructions: "Read this letter, too, to Bertin. I cannot write to him. He must pity and forgive me."

The French Cardinals gradually arrived. This was in March, and Chateaubriand put them up as best he could. Unfortunately, he was subject to bad health, which made his task still more difficult. A short letter,⁴ scrawled in haste on Monday morning, March 16th, shows traces of his fatigue:

"I sent you two or three lines last night by Hyacinthe. I was ill. The courier has not started, and so I am sending a line this morning. I am still unwell. It is the sirocco apparently. I am in the most complete state of prostration.

¹ No. 155. ² Unpublished letter. ³ Unpublished, No. 156.

⁴ No. 158, unpublished. On the 17th of March he wrote to Mme. de V.

I hope to finish for to-morrow's post. Yours ever, even after death."

Even at this critical moment, in the midst of so much and such serious business, Chateaubriand does not forget to send his friend his best protestations of affection:

"I have just received your short letter of March 9th," he says to her on the 21st.¹ "It is sad and disheartened. Are you hiding something from me? Have you anything to complain of in me? Have I not made up for all my faults, and am I not just going to join you or to see you come out to me? One more month and all our perplexities will be over. Come now, take courage; my whole life is yours. This is not giving you much, but I am giving you what I have to give. I should like to have long years to devote to you."

Finally Chateaubriand obtained a victory. He saw the Pope elected whom he had put on his list, Cardinal Castiglioni.² Mme. Récamier was commissioned to tell Bertin and "the worthy Kératry" of the *Courrier*. "You will be wise enough," says Chateaubriand, "not to bring them together." The Ambassador had a superb triumph. "I am sending to the Ministry," he tells his friend on the 2nd of April,³ "documents such as no Government has ever received." He then asked for leave of absence, on account of his health. "I thought I should suffocate in the night," he says. "I am going to put my feet in mustard."⁴

In Paris *Le Constitutionnel* and *Le Messager* were having a battle. "I saw from the papers," wrote Chateaubriand,⁵ "the *Constitutionnel's* great quarrel about my speech. It accuses the *Messager* of not having printed it, and we have some *Messagers* of the 22nd of March in Rome [the quarrel was on the 24th and 25th] which *have the speech*. Is not that singular? It appears evident that there are two editions, one for Rome and the other for Paris. Poor people! I am thinking of the *mystification* of the *Gazette*, which declares that

¹ No. 163, *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 345 and following. Unpublished passage of this letter.

² Letter No. 168. *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 352; *M.O.T.*, V, p. 171 and following.

³ No. 169, unpublished letter.

⁵ Unpublished letter of April 7th, No. 172.

⁴ Same letter.

the Conclave was very much displeased with this speech. What will it say when it sees the praise given me by Cardinal Castiglioni, who has become Pope?"

"When shall I cease talking to you about all these wretched things?" adds Chateaubriand.¹ "When shall I have nothing else to say but that all my happiness is in you? When shall I have nothing to do but finish the memoirs of my life and my life, too, as the last page of these memoirs?"²

It is with regret that we abridge the end of this correspondence. There is a great deal yet to be taken from these letters to Mme. Récamier, in which the Chateaubriand of everyday life, so to speak, gives us such an idea of his admirable genius as an observer and writer. It is with the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* that we ought to complete this information. The *Mémoires*, however, in which some of these letters appear to be touched up, have not the spontaneous charm and grace of this confidence, kept up with such exactitude and so flattering for that incomparable friend who certainly deserved to receive it.³

Chateaubriand started at last for France, hurt by a final despatch from Portalis,⁴ displeased with Adrien de Montmorency and not at all inclined to come to any understanding with him,⁵ and "displeased too with everyone."⁶

"I am not telling you anything more about politics," he writes to his friend on May 13th.⁷ "I exhausted the subject in my last letters, and as I know absolutely nothing fresh, I cannot rush into new conjectures. We will arrange everything for the best for *ourselves*, for as to supposing that I shall be consulted, that the plan I have in my mind will be adopted, that what I say will be done, either in home or foreign affairs, I do not believe a word of it. Our foreign politics above all are unworthy and disgraceful. I would

¹ Letter No. 172, of April 7th, unpublished.

² In the collection of letters from Chateaubriand his note now comes in to the Cardinal Fesch, which is published in *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 355. On April 18th Chateaubriand wrote to Mme. de V. and made an appointment with her in Paris.

³ The letters of the 8th (seven pages), 23rd, and 30th of April are unpublished ones, as well as the one of May 2nd.

⁴ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 389.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Unpublished letter, No. 191.

not for a single moment adhere to them as they are. And you may be sure that I should make all our statesmen tremble if I proposed the very smallest part of the things I should like to do for the glory of the country."

Adrien de Montmorency had refused the Ministry.

On the 16th of May, 1829, Chateaubriand left Rome. A last letter to Mme. Récamier left a few hours after her faithful friend. It said :¹

"This letter will close this correspondence, which has not missed a single courier and which must form quite a volume. Yours is very small and, when packing it yesterday evening, on seeing how little room it took up, my heart was not very tranquil."

Mme. Récamier was delighted at his return, and wrote as follows to her niece Amélie on the 21st of April, 1829 : "M. de Chateaubriand has obtained his leave of absence. I have had a letter from him eight pages long ; he is very much agitated."² On the 21st of May she wrote : "M. de Chateaubriand has arrived. I am more disturbed about the situation in which he will find himself than happy to see him again. I do not know whether he will return to Italy. This uncertainty about your lot and about his throws me into such a state of mind that I cannot make any plans."³ Did Chateaubriand deserve such affection ? Have the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* confessed all ? Did Mme. Lenormant know all ? We must question the existing documents.

Chateaubriand had taken with him to Rome, in 1828, an attaché of nineteen years of age, M. d'Haussonville.⁴ This young man, who until then was very enthusiastic with regard to the writer of *La Monarchie suivant la Charte*, tells us himself that his sojourn in Rome caused this admiration to diminish slightly. M. d'Haussonville gives us an account which helps us to correct the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, or rather to discover the primitive truth under the touching up and the exaggerations. He tells us how Mme. Récamier "asked for and obtained the omission of certain pages concerning her."

¹ No. 194 of the MSS., *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 372.

² *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 187.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁴ *Haussonville, Ma jeunesse*, p. 163 and following.

She was on friendly terms with Mme. Letissier, the wife of a deputy of the Restoration, and she asked this friend to find out whether in Chateaubriand's manuscript there were not some passages that it would be advisable to ask him to sacrifice. M. de Ronchaud, later on Director of the Museums, took part at this time in the delicate mission, and it was he who gave these details to M. d'Haussonville. This witness did not remember very exactly the omitted passages, but he recollects that when describing his first interview with Mme. Récamier, Chateaubriand had written: "I found her reclining languidly on a sofa, and I wondered on leaving her whether I had seen the statue of modesty or that of love." "In another place," continues M. d'Haussonville,¹ "it was a question of evenings spent in the country on the terrace of a *château*, the steps of which led down to a wood full of shade and mystery, where, far from all eyes, he had strolled about late into the night with the divine charmer."

We have no difficulty in admitting the sincerity and exactitude of these details. But the young *attaché* does not confine his revelations to these details. He arrived in Rome two months after his chief, and from the beginning he was observant. It seemed to him from the first that Chateaubriand was not very well pleased that he had brought his wife with him. "It was a sort of drawback with which he would willingly have dispensed." Mme. de Chateaubriand was aware of this situation, and avenged herself slightly by taking advantage of all her privileges, not hesitating to contradict her illustrious husband and to carry on a "little private warfare." The Ambassador resigned himself to this. "He had so much to expiate," writes his *attaché* slyly. There was a large embassy staff: three secretaries, MM. Belloc, Desmousseaux de Givré, de Ganay, and a very large number of *attachés*. There was very little intimacy between the Ambassador and his staff.

M. d'Haussonville protests about certain parts of the account given by Chateaubriand of his stay in Rome. According to him, Chateaubriand exaggerated the splendour of his fêtes, the jealousy of his colleagues, the mediocrity of the

¹ Haussonville, *Ma jeunesse*, p. 171.

other members of the diplomatic corps, and the sureness of his political information. The French Embassy at Rome was rather melancholy. After receiving M. Belloc's news every evening Chateaubriand played chess with M. de Givré. He seemed bored all the time. "There is no doubt, in my opinion," says M. d'Haussonville,¹ "that, deeply absorbed in his own contemplation, M. de Chateaubriand, like all such people, thought exclusively then of himself."

The young attaché seems to have been rather cruelly clear-sighted. His account is a long one and, although most interesting, we cannot follow him now in all details. We must, however, note what M. d'Haussonville tells us with regard to Chateaubriand's intercourse with women during his Ambassadorship. This point touches directly on our study, so that a few indications on this delicate subject will help us to appreciate more thoroughly the letters to Mme. Récamier.

The indiscreet *attaché* tells us that his chief went sometimes to the Via delle Quattro-Fontane to call on a "very fascinating person," the celebrated Prudence of the *Enchantements*, whom Chateaubriand was to see again later in Paris, at one time living near the Champ de Mars, and at another near the Jardin des Plantes. M. d'Haussonville also took bouquets from his chief to the Comtesse del Drago. When Chateaubriand left Rome rather hastily, M. d'Haussonville wondered whether this truly abrupt departure had been determined by his desire to see Mme. Récamier again. At first he did not think so. "The name of that friend," he writes, "was scarcely ever pronounced, in my presence at least, in the Simonetti Palace, whilst that of the Comtesse del Drago was always to be heard."² He accuses his chief of wanting to meet again in Paris the inhabitant of the Via delle Quattro-Fontane. But later on he thinks better of this, and he adds, very sensibly: "I fancy that Mme. Récamier's chances were, after all, by far the most serious ones. Prudence's reign was brilliant but fleeting. She was a green-room queen whom it would have been difficult to produce in the full light of the

¹ Haussonville, *Ma jeunesse*, p. 186.

² *Ibid.*, p. 213.

stage, and her favours could only have been transient ones."¹

The shade is very correctly delineated. Chateaubriand, as a matter of fact, was drawn back to Paris above all by the desire for power, by his intention to take advantage of the election of *his Pope*. His letters to Mme. Récamier show him struggling between his hopes and his uncertainties. As a matter of fact, the piquant *Souvenirs* of M. d'Haussonville reconstruct the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* with episodes and opinions given in detail. They are most entertaining and undoubtedly a very sincere complement to these, but, in spite of the adventure with Prudence and the bouquets sent to the Comtesse del Drago, they do not contain things which could cause Chateaubriand to be suspected of hypocrisy in his tenderly affectionate intercourse with Mme. Récamier.

The following episode is perhaps more grave. During his stay in Rome, Chateaubriand was corresponding with a certain Marquise de V., who, shut up in a *château* at Vivarais, cultivated religiously a kind of adoration for the author of the *Génie du christianisme*.² He did not know her, or at least he had never seen her. He did not know that she was about fifty years old; he thought she was young, and had replied with passion to her protestations of friendship. As a matter of fact, this passion is to be traced more particularly in Chateaubriand's letters before his departure for Rome; but after that date he still wrote to her in a sufficiently animated way for Juliette to have had reason to complain if she had known about this intrigue. On the 14th of September, he wrote to Mme. Récamier that letter which we have completed from the original text, in which he calls her his "beautiful

¹ Haussonville, *Majeunesse*, p. 215. It seems to us impossible to omit, as M. Biré has done (edition of *M.O.T.*, V, p. 405, note 1), and above all M. Bertin (*Sinc. relig. de Chateaubriand*, p. 329 and following), the intrigue with Prudence. Hortense Allart's story (*Enchant de Prudence*, p. 146 and following) is in itself very probable. We find Chateaubriand there just as we know him, elegant, fascinating, tender at times, charmed by youth and talent. We cannot deny this adventure, which had its conclusion in Paris. It was for Chateaubriand one of those agreeable episodes with which his path in life was strewn. M. Bertin's clumsy panegyric only confirms us in this opinion.

² See *Un dernier amour de René, Corr. de Chateaubriand avec la Marquise de V.* Paris, Perrin, 1903.

angel," beseeches her not to cry any more, and entreats her to come to Rome.¹ On the evening before, Saturday the 13th, he had sent to the Marquise de V. "the expression of a tender and sincere sentiment."² From Milan on the same day, he wrote to Juliette and to Marie (the name of the unknown woman),³ and this without any too much consideration for Mme. de Chateaubriand, who was travelling with him. On the 11th of October, he does the same. "Rome has left me cold," he says to the one; "Rome has not affected me," he writes to the other one. It is true that the letter to Mme. Récamier is much longer and more detailed. The same thing occurs on October 21st, November 15th, and November 20th. The very day on which he declared to Mme. Récamier that she need not give him any warnings—"Do not fear anything; I am case-hardened"⁴—he wrote to Marie: "What is it that you feel for an unknown man, a stranger whom you have never seen? *Passion?* I accept it."⁵ On the 11th of December, after having sent to Mme. Récamier the description of his *ricevimento*, he declares to Marie that she is wrong in complaining, that he has "never written such long letters to anyone as to her."⁶ When he is about to leave Rome he is curious to meet his unknown friend in Paris. He meets her there. He asks her for an appointment on the 28th of May, the very evening of his arrival.⁷ He sees her again on Saturday May 30th, and the following Saturday June 6th.⁸ On the 9th of June he sends her a note assuring her that he "loves her tenderly,"⁹ which he has already told her often in his interviews with her,¹⁰ mysterious interviews during which the Marquise de V. acquires the right of calling Chateaubriand her "darling friend."¹¹

We must also add that during Chateaubriand's Ambassadorship at Rome he continued his literary intercourse, which was already of old standing, with Mme. de Cottens, with that Laure de Cazenove d'Arlens who, in 1804, when scarcely sixteen, was to have married her cousin, Benjamin Constant, and who, in 1825, met René for the first time,

¹ See *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 224.

² Work quoted, p. 156.

³ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 232; work quoted, p. 160.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁵ Work quoted, p. 184.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

under circumstances that are not known. His hair was at that time beginning to turn grey, and he was very gloomy.¹ Chateaubriand had a "tender, sincere, and respectful attachment" for her. He wrote to her very regularly during his absence, and did not spare his protestations of affection. "To see you again by crossing the Alps or by going in search of you is the only joy that I can see in my life."² "I shall cross the Alps again which separate me from you; I shall see you again, and I shall forget my troubles and my years. Another year is just finishing; it is full of sweet memories of you, and if I am to have still another one, that too will be full of you."³ The whole of this correspondence is less animated and less warm than that with the Marquise de V. The shade is very marked in this ending: "Believe, Madame, in an attachment which will only end with my life. I only wish that this could be less far advanced in order to be able to love you, forgive the word, longer."⁴

Briefly, whilst Chateaubriand was writing to Mme. Récamier that long series of letters which delighted her, he still found time to send bouquets to the Comtesse del Drago, to visit Prudence, to charm and trouble the unknown Marquise, and to keep up the affectionate intercourse which bound him to Mme. de Cottens. The *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, this time again, do not tell us the whole truth. If we were inclined to be malevolent, it would be easy to reproach Chateaubriand with this conduct, with this aptitude to scatter his affection about, and with thus persisting in expecting from others much more than he gave them. We may at least say that if his affection for Mme. Récamier was sincere, there was nothing exclusive about it. It was all in vain that he was growing old; his inconstant and variable soul, always in search of fresh impressions, could not remain constant. Sixty years of age had not exhausted his imagination and, with that charm which still made so many victims, he retained

¹ See *Une correspondance inédite de Chateaubriand*, in *Le Correspondant* of August 25th, 1901.

² Letter of November 13th, 1828. Article quoted, p. 689.

³ Letter of December 18th, 1828. Article quoted, p. 690.

⁴ Letter of March 21st, 1829. Article quoted.

that fickleness and that need of agitation with which more serious minds or jealous rivals reproached him.

Adrien de Montmorency could not resign himself to his new situation in Vienna. He regretted Italy, and complained of his loneliness in a country where everything seemed fresh to him. Before leaving Paris he had had a final conversation with Juliette, and it must have been somewhat disturbing, as he wanted to know what impression it had made on Mme. Récamier.¹ Every courier from Vienna brought to the Abbaye a souvenir from the Ambassador. "I am flirting with you from the Danube to the Seine," he writes. "I should very much prefer the Tiber, which makes me think every day of what I call my abdication.² Your friend René has certainly carried off from me the best post. May he enjoy it and give it me back when ambition, disgust, or luck, and perhaps still more his inconstancy, call him elsewhere!³ Tell me that every kind of shade of displeasure has passed away. It is a weight on my heart, and I thought that the person who caused this evil could not do any more after the cruel and unexpected evil already done me."⁴

The Ambassador at Vienna complained of receiving news too rarely from the Abbaye. "For really," he said to Mme. Récamier,⁵ "your style is charming and in exquisite taste. I do sincerely notice this very evident improvement in your letters that I was so pleased to admire in your conversation." Adrien no longer asked for anything but a "pleasant, intimate, and kindly friendship." Chateaubriand had prevailed over all other friends.

"Nothing is more gracious," wrote the Duc de Laval, "than your way of quoting the melancholy impressions of your greatest friend. His words are full of grace and sentiment for you. Is it not all a rather more sombre colour than his, and a way, in which he has always succeeded, for getting you there where he is? My opinion is that you will

¹ Letter dated October 11th, 1828. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 244 and following.

² Letter of October 31st, and not of November 12th. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 245 and following.

³ Same letter.

⁴ Same letter, unpublished passage.

⁵ Letter of November 12th, 1828. M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

not resist if he continues in this strain. By the bye, I am not envious of all the praises, the approbation, and the conquests of my successor. I certainly read with pleasure these letters from Rome. But why in these letters, manufactured in concert with the Embassy, such phrases as :—‘M. de L. did a great deal of good ; M. de Ch. will do still more.’ Tell me with impartial kindness whether you think my susceptibility out of place.”¹

Mme. Récamier was so delighted with Chateaubriand’s letters that she copied fragments of them to send to Adrien de Montmorency. What else could he do but thank her for them ? He allowed his legitimate annoyance to be perceptible, though. “What I distinguish in this correspondence,” he writes, “is that Amélie’s aunt is in the highest stage of exaltation in her sentiment for her friend who, while excavating in the earth, finds such sweet things to say.”² In his letter of March 31st he says : “I am sometimes annoyed to know that you are so content, and I assure you it is not that I am unkind.”³

In April 1829, the Duc de Laval refused the office proposed to him.⁴ The Liberal papers attacked him rather violently.

This time, and contrary to his custom, the Duc de Laval wrote to Mme. Récamier in a deeply affected and almost angry tone :⁵

“I am persuading myself that you have not failed in your friendship to me and in interest for my situation since that fatal decree of April 24th. You can judge with what a painful feeling of anxiety I am awaiting the replies to my answers by my courier of May 2nd. It took a line to you.⁶ I have no reason to repent, and I shall never hesitate in thinking that the decision I took was the best, the most conscientious,

¹ Letter of November 12th, 1828. The passage quoted in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 286, from *Je ne sais pourquoi*, belongs to the letter of November 12th. Mme. Lenormant has put two letters into one.

² Letter of March 24th, 1829.

³ Mme. Lenormant in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 348 and following, has made one letter of the fragments of the letter of March 24th and that of March 31st.

⁴ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 231.

⁵ Unpublished letter, of May 12th, in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection.

⁶ This letter does not exist in M. Ch. de Loménié’s papers.

and the most honourable one. I am awaiting the King's orders. I am ready to leave the Embassy to M. de Rayneval, as the papers say, or to M. de Blacas, according to the opinion of other letters. I have no real trouble or worry except the idea of having displeased the King and of having created fresh difficulties for him. That the papers of one colour should shoot their arrows at me is quite natural, but that the imbecile *Messager* should only be able to find stupid platitudes with which to defend me makes me indignant, and I am asking the Ministry formally that the *Messager* shall be silent. That is what I have to say and to demand. I have no reason to thank your friend of the *Globe*.

"But what are these insults for? Is it true, as I have every reason to believe, that René no longer wants to leave Rome, that he has put his leave in his pocket, and that in order to be more at his ease he is sending his wife back to Paris? I still have here in my desk that very melancholy fragment of a letter in which he desires nothing but to start away and to go to the Abbaye. Good God! What inconstancy in his ideas! Remember me to M. Ballanche, provided that he has not been the one to treat me so badly in the papers of his party."

Chateaubriand's return brought joy once more to the Abbaye. The Ambassador on leave made all kinds of projects. He wanted to take Mme. Récamier to Rome and see her settle in the Caffarelli Palace. He brought back with him many grievances and exposed himself to bitter disappointments. Fortunately, Mme. Récamier had not lost her illusions about things. "M. de Chateaubriand arrived on Thursday," she wrote to her niece on the 1st of June.¹ "I was glad to see him again, more glad than I fancied I should be. I see a fair number of people, M. Villemain, whom I think very pleasant, M. de Sainte-Aulaire, etc., but it is M. de Chateaubriand's arrival that has reanimated my life, which seemed to me so near its close."

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 376 and 377.

CHAPTER XXI

THE ABBAYE-AUX-BOIS AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1830 (MAY 1829—1831)

The Abbaye guests in 1829.—The reading of Chateaubriand's *Moïse* (June).—Consequences of the formation of the Polignac Ministry (August).—Chateaubriand resigns office as Ambassador (August 28th).—The Due de Laval starts for London (October).—Mérimée and diplomacy.—Edgar Quinet at the Abbaye (January 1830).—Mme. Récamier at the first performance of *Hernani* (February 25th).—Jean-Jacques Ampère at the Athénée of Marseilles (March 1830).—Death of M. Récamier (April 19th).—Chateaubriand and the July days.—Sainte-Beuve's first introduction to the Abbaye.—Death of Benjamin Constant (December 8th).—Departure of Chateaubriand for Switzerland (May 1831); his letters to Mme. Récamier and Ballanche; his return to Paris (October).—Balzac; *La Peau de Chagrin*; Comtesse Féodor.

On the eve of the Revolution of 1830, immediately after Chateaubriand's return, the Abbaye-aux-Bois was more brilliant than it had ever been. Young men of great promise filled the gaps which death had made among Mme. Récamier's old friends. All generations figured in her *salon*, where her graciousness attracted representatives of the most varied society and opinions. Victor Cousin, whom the Martignac Ministry had allowed to return to his chair, came there to hear the echo of the success he had won by his liberal teaching at the Sorbonne. Villemain was collecting there the elements for the study he was to devote later on to Chateaubriand. He met the men there with whom he was to unite for the July Revolution. Henri de Latouche, who has been more discussed and with more cause, was preparing the famous article which he published in the *Revue de Paris* against his former friends the romanticists. The bad trick

he had played on Mme. de Duras was still remembered. He published his novel *Fragoletta*, in which Mme. Récamier had a rôle, this year 1829.¹ By the side of Dubois, the founder of the *Globe*, Saint-Marc Girardin (who was quite young but already celebrated, and three times over Laureate of the Academy), brought into the discussion of Liberal theses his art of comparisons, his animation and calm boldness. Valéry, the learned traveller, met there the author of *La Jacquerie* and of the *Chronique du règne de Charles IX*. The painter Gérard was getting old, but he still produced his pictures; *L'Extase de Sainte-Thérèse*, *Le Sacre de Charles X*, and *L'Espérance* belong to this epoch. He was one of the oldest and most faithful of Juliette's friends. He came there to vouch to her beauty as he had known it. And among the politicians, the worthy Duc de Doudeauville, who had resigned office in order to protest against the dissolution of the National Guard; the liberal Duc de Broglie, the Comte de Sainte-Aulaire, a convinced partisan of constitutional monarchy; Prosper de Barante, the future Ambassador to Turin; Baron Pasquier, whose campaign in the Chamber of Peers against reactionary measures is not forgotten. Among the women were Mme. Appony, Mme. de Fontanes and Mme. Gay, Mme. de Boigne, Mme. de Gramont, Mme. and Mlles. de Barante, Mlle. de Sainte-Aulaire.²

In honour of Chateaubriand, and by way of consoling him for his disappointment with regard to *Moïse*, Mme. Récamier organized a reading of this tragedy. The actor Lafond was to make it known to the *habitués* of the Abbaye.³ Latouche gave an account of this solemnity in an article published in the *Revue de Paris*. A few years later a rather curious account of it in verse appeared in the *Mémoires poétiques*,⁴ brought out in a limited edition and without the name of the author. Lamartine gave a long account of it in his *Cours familier de littérature*.⁵ "All the glory and all the charm of France were there." The *salon* appeared to Lamar-

¹ See Vol. II, p. 79 and following.

² All these names are given by Ballanche in a letter dated June 28th, 1829. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 379. ³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 377.

⁴ Paris, Techener, 1833. See our Bibliography.

⁵ Vol. IX, p. 34 and following.

tine to "offer to the eye the symmetry and coldness of an Academy holding its meeting in a monastery." "It was a Court," he said, "but rather an old Court: the furniture was simple and worn; there were a few books scattered about on the side-tables, a few busts of the time of the Empire on the brackets, a few screens of the Louis XV century were the only things in the way of ornament." Chateaubriand was there, seated under the picture of Corinne at the Cape Misène, receiving and returning salutations. Lafond commenced the reading, but he had not prepared it well. He read the first acts in a hesitating way, and Chateaubriand finally took the manuscript and read it himself. "Everyone went away with superficial emotion but with real respect." Lamartine must have returned more than once to Mme. Récamier's, although Chateaubriand did not care much for him and considered him "a great booby."¹ Sainte-Beuve met him there, and criticized severely what he called his "incoherence" of conversation.²

Chateaubriand was neither fortunate in his literary enterprises nor in his political ambitions. Mme. Récamier left him to go to Dieppe. She took Ballanche with her, and installed herself there "in a kind of tower, where he worked at his *Palingénésie*.³ Ballanche was also thinking about a *Zénobie* which should be an epopee of the early times of Christianity.⁴ He contented himself with writing his *Vision d'Hébal*, an episode of the *Ville des Expiations* of which he had thought as early as 1824.⁵

The formation of the Polignac Ministry in August, 1829, had the gravest consequences for Mme. Récamier's friends. Charles X gave the Presidency of the Council to the Prince de Polignac, together with the Foreign Affairs. Mme. Récamier declared categorically to her niece that she saw in this solution "dangers for France or at least an alarming tendency."⁶ She supposed that Chateaubriand would send in his resignation. The supposition proved right. Whilst

¹ See B. Jouvin, *Le Figaro* of August 8th, 1875.

² *Causeries du Lundi*, XI, p. 463.

³ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, pp. 381 and 382.

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 195.

⁵ Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 39.

⁶ *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 380.

Mme. Récamier went to Dieppe, Chateaubriand went to Cauterets. He tells us in his *Mémoires*¹ how the whole of his journey to the Pyrenees was "a succession of dreams." He did his utmost to be sad, and it was all in vain. He composed poetry, met a young woman, an "Occitanienne" who had been writing to him for two years, but whom he had never seen. He inspired this young "stranger of sixteen years" with a sincere attachment, but let "the fleeting impression of his Clémence Isaure die away." We know even that he made "passionate avowals" to this "charming flower" which he would not gather, and which only received his "last songs of sadness."²

It was at Cauterets that Chateaubriand learnt, through the *Moniteur*, of the formation of the new Ministry. He at once made up his mind, although his Ambassadorship at Rome had ruined him. He returned slowly to Paris, and on arriving there sent in his resignation to the Prince de Polignac.³ He refused to retract at the end of a long conversation with the new Minister. "On foot," he says, "along the Boulevard des Invalides I took once more the path to my infirmary, poor wounded creature that I was."

Charles Lenormant had also returned to ask for a prolongation of his sojourn in Greece. On hearing of the appointment of de Polignac he renounced the idea of making his request. He entered the service of the Beaux-Arts once more, with the title of Curator of the Monuments of Art of the Royal Palaces.⁴

The Duc de Laval's position was not quite the same. His ardent royalism allowed him to keep his functions under Polignac. After refusing the Ministry he stayed in Vienna to await events. In his letters he continued to allude to the intimacy of Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier. "It is true, then," he wrote to her on the 19th of July,⁵ "that you are preparing to spend the winter at the *Capitole*, positively at

¹ Vol. V, p. 235 and following.

² See the admirable fragment published by V. Giraud, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, April 1st, 1899. ³ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 244 and following.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 383. Wallon, *Notice sur Ch. Lenormant*, pp. 19-20.

⁵ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

the *Capitole al Palazzo Caffarelli*. This is what I am told, anyhow. No doubt you will do well, and I could not disapprove the one who is persuading you into it, if only for the glory of attracting you there. I have read a quantity of little pamphlets here saying bad things and scandalous things, but they always respect you and praise your charms. I am convinced that among the writers of them are some of the young men who have been to the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Tell me who writes the *Mémoires d'une femme de qualité*.¹ Why have you never sent me a word in the way of a message from your greatest friend? Is he colder than usual? I do not know the motive, but you must own that it is odd to change his mind so many times with regard to Rome." The Duc de Montmorency emphasized the immunity which Mme. Récamier enjoyed at a time when political parties were exchanging the worst insults. "I compliment you," he says in his letter of April 11th,² "on the fact that no new book appears which does not contain hymns of admiration for you. Everyone, without exception, is being insulted on one side or the other. You are the only person in France who is respected."

Chateaubriand had asked the Prince de Polignac to give back to the Duc de Laval the Ambassadorship of Rome.³ The Duc was sent to London. He started in October, charged with instructions favourable to the Greeks. Mme. Récamier feared that, in spite of all his qualities, he was wanting in conviction for the accomplishment of his mission. "Although he is generous," she wrote to J. J. Ampère,⁴ "his aristocratic habits make him, I fear, easy to satisfy with regard to the interests of the people." At this time Mérimée manifested a desire to enter the diplomatic service. Mme. Récamier would have liked him to make his *début* with the Duc de Laval. She commissioned Ampère to make some offers to Mérimée,⁵ who refused from motives of opinion and in order to follow, as he said, Chateaubriand's example, but very much, too, for the sake of not giving up his profession as a writer.⁶

¹ See our Bibliography.

² Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

³ M.O.T., V, p. 247.

⁴ Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse, p. 274.

⁵ Ibid., p. 275. ⁶ Ibid., p. 276 and following.

The ex-Ambassador had resumed his pen. He had taken up once more his historical works, and was "waiting impatiently for the moment of history in action."¹ Mme. Récamier made researches for him, read Thiers, Mignet, and even Tacitus.² When separating from de Polignac Chateaubriand had undoubtedly obeyed a sentiment of honour, but it is certain that he had also counted on a speedy revenge, for which he was reserving himself. Surrounded as he was with the homages of the press and of Liberal opinion, how could he fail to see in himself the President of the next Ministry? His friends encouraged him in this hope and were already at work to obtain this result. We have the proof in this short letter from Ballanche to Mme. Récamier:³

"I have just seen Kératry. I wanted to make sure that he had received the letter I left at his house for him yesterday evening. You can be tranquil about this. He and his friends are so convinced of the impossibility of the present Ministry that they are already thinking about the next one, in which M. de Chateaubriand might be advised to keep M. de Polignac. Now they would be distressed if M. de Chateaubriand should make this sacrifice of his inclinations. They say that M. de Polignac might have entered a coalition Ministry before being associated with M. de la Bourdonnaie, but that now M. de Chateaubriand would be compromising in vain if, in a new combination, he accepted him for a colleague. We have not yet arrived at that."

The winter of 1829-1830 passed by with things in this way. Mme. Récamier now had a larger flat at the Abbaye.⁴ She had given up her former one to Mme. Clarke and her daughter, who were thus living quite near her and were soon on very friendly terms with her.⁵

Certain persons did not forgive Mme. Récamier her attachment to the Liberal party. Among them was the Duchesse de Montmorency. She represented rigid Royalism, and considered the interests of the throne and those of the Church

¹ Letter from Mme. Récamier, *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 275.

² *Ibid.*

³ Ballanche : letters to various people, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 274.

⁵ O'Meara, *Un salon à Paris*, pp. 19-20.

bound together in an indissoluble union. She often saw Mme. Récamier, joked her about her Liberalism, and did not spare her the most edifying sermons on the subject of religion. The resignation of Chateaubriand had very much annoyed her. "Truly," she wrote, "it is too much to identify one's self with the *Journal des Débats*, which oversteps all moderation. . . . Alas! if only in his solitude he would read his own works he would be more convinced then than by all my arguments of the dangers of the Liberal concessions."¹ Mathieu de Montmorency's widow was defending a system which she called the *system of God and of honest people*,² or again, *a sad and timid religious royalist policy*.³ "Ah," she wrote,⁴ "if the King, instead of giving himself up to concessions, would openly take another way, that of God and honest people! Your friend the *Constitutionnel* would cry out a little more still, but it would at least be for some reason." She was glad that God had spared her husband the grief of seeing "this beautiful France putting herself again in the power of the Liberals, for," she added, "I beg the pardon of your friends, but it is there that we shall soon arrive."⁵ In a letter of the same epoch⁶ she says to Juliette: "Now your friends are satisfied. Their pupils have been taken away from the poor Jesuits. Everything it wants is being ceded to the empire of Liberalism. I am afraid that religion and royalty will come off very badly with this system. How right I was when I said to you that too much honour was done to Charles X when it was said that he was a Jesuit." On the 2nd of August, 1829,⁷ there are the same grievances. "It is high time," she says, "to follow a system entirely religious and monarchical." The Duchesse would have liked to see Chateaubriand start from Naples and accept this "very flattering"⁸ family Ambassadorship. The Polignac Ministry was according to her wishes, whilst at the Abbaye it was being censured and its fall was awaited.

It was in January, 1830, that Mme. Récamier invited Edgar

¹ Letter No. 11, M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.

² *Ibid.*

³ Letter No. 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶ Letter No. 16 bis.

⁷ Letter No. 17.

⁸ Letter No. 25.

Quinet to call and see her.¹ At this epoch she received three days a week. Quinet went on Wednesdays to Guizot's, on Saturdays to Cuvier's, and it soon became his custom to go to Mme. Récamier's on Fridays. He was so charmed with his welcome there that, in the midst of all his thoughts and of all his work, for he was then preparing with great fervour *La Grèce moderne*, Michelet's friend wrote as follows to his mother :² " Except Mme. Récamier, all the women have little or no charm for me." Lerminier and Dubois wanted to enroll Quinet for the *Globe*, which was preparing to become a political paper. The translator of Herder, the future professor of the College of France, was at that time twenty-seven years of age. There were many reasons to recommend him to Mme. Récamier's kindness. When a young student of sixteen he had been charmed by the sensibility of Mme. de Staél. " She must have had a great many hearts in her power," he had written with precocious penetration, " to have been able to observe all their movements in this way."³ He begged his dear mother to send him Saussure's notice of Mme. Necker, and he read that work with passion.⁴ In 1823 Quinet had made his pilgrimage to Mme. de Staél's park.⁵ Then, too, when he was living at the Hôtel de France, and was only a law student, he had received a little note from Benjamin Constant, whom he admired.⁶ Constant had written to him again at Heidelberg,⁷ and later on invited him to his *soirées*. Quinet had not forgotten, either, the eager welcome and encouragements of Gérando.⁸ Finally in 1825, he had experienced the deepest joy of his life in seeing Chateaubriand at the public meeting of the Academy, and on hearing him read the Introduction to his *Histoire de France*.⁹ It was therefore only natural that Quinet should come and take part in the pleasant discussions at the Abbaye. On the 8th of February, 1830, he wrote to his mother :¹⁰ " I would send you M. Ballanche's *Orphée*, too, if you like, although I do not know

¹ Quinet, *Lettres à sa mère*, II, p. 133.

² *Ibid.*, II, p. 134.

³ *Ibid.*, I, p. 55.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71. Compare p. 139.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁷ *Ibid.*, II, p. 39.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 303, 304, and 310.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 382 and following.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, p. 139.

how you will like this love for Mme. Récamier transported among the Titans and Cyclops of Samothrace."

Whatever may have been Mme. Récamier's attachment to the past, she had preserved enough freshness of mind to be interested in everything new. She was present at the first performance of *Hernani*. A few days before this solemnity Mérimée had sent Victor Hugo this letter, which was at the same time pleasant and disagreeable for the person receiving it : "The Universe is appealing to me for boxes and stalls. I am not speaking of the requests that I have had from the *intellectual leaders*, as the *Globe* would say. Mme. Récamier asks me whether by my intermediary, etc. . . . See what you can do. You know that she has a certain influence in a certain world. I said it was impossible to have a box. She then asked me whether it were possible to have two 'bishops' caps.' Where is virtue to take refuge?"¹ The day following the performance Chateaubriand sent his compliments to Hugo,² and the *Journal des Débats*, which was very closely connected with the Abbaye, was nearly the only paper in all the press which did not attack the piece. On the 8th of April, 1830, Charles Lenormant wrote to Jean-Jacques Ampère : "What do you think of *Hernani*? Have you spoken of it to your six hundred listeners? It seems to me that it is for you to push the new school a little yonder. Sainte-Beuve seems to me to have taken a high stand in his *Consolations*.³"

Jean-Jacques Ampère was at this time professor of literature at the Athénée of Marseilles. This post had been successively offered to Joseph Méry and to Sainte-Beuve, who had both refused it.⁴ It had been given to Ampère on the proposal of Mignet. His success had been great. He chose for the subject of his lecture the history of Scandinavian poetry, and, although the subject did not appear to lend itself to this, he took advantage of his opening lesson to make a

¹ *Victor Hugo raconté*, edit. in-8, II, p. 277.

² *Ibid.*, p. 288. The reports of Chateaubriand and romanticism have been studied in *Chateaubriand et le romantisme*, by Louis Nadeau, Paris, 1874, in-8. See also Th. Gautier, *Histoire du romantisme*, edit. Charpentier, p. 4.

³ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 285.
⁴ See J. J. Ampère, *Étude hist. et litt.*, by Tamisier, Marseilles, 1864, p. 28 and following.

profession of Liberal faith. The Athénée of Marseilles had been authorized by Martignac, but the Prefect of Bouches-du-Rhône, the Marquis d'Arbaud-Jouques, was an unbending Royalist. Ampère was fortunate enough to know how to express his ideas without compromising the institution which had accepted him.¹ During his absence Mme. Récamier kept him posted about events. Some of the charming letters she wrote to him have been published.² The two following letters, which have not hitherto been published, are in the same tone :

"I should have thanked you earlier for your business letter if I had not been very unwell. M. Ballanche has arranged everything for the moment, and I am there for the future,³ and only too glad to be able to spare your father a moment's vexation. I have seen Sautelet. His interest in you went straight to my heart. He will come and tell me the decision about the lectures. He will have told you that I approved absolutely. Cousin is not well. I am sorry not to see him ; we should talk about you. I had a long conversation with Mérimée about you. I am naturally inclined to like those who like you. I cannot get used to your absence, to ending my evenings without you. I do not let anyone else stay, and when you are back we will continue our pleasant customs. I am not very well again yet, and I cannot see what I am writing."⁴

"I do not know whether the reasons you give me are very good, but I am easily persuaded and quite fascinated at the hope of seeing you again sooner. My friendship cannot get accustomed to your absence. I hope, nevertheless, that you are working, and that you will bring us back some treasures. I have already thought often about our readings. You will be delighted with my new room, with its large windows over the garden. Imagine to yourself a beautiful evening with the moonlight that you like, the fine picture of Corinne, the scent of the flowers in the garden and our sweet confidential talks, our memories of Italy, our reading, our plans. We

¹ *Sainte-Beuve, Portr. cont.*, III, p. 358, and *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 220.

² *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 272 and following.

³ J. J. Ampère was in very serious money difficulties.

⁴ Unpublished letter, from copy belonging to M. de Loménié.

shall have all that again, and if you bring us back your excellent father cured by the climate and your care we shall be too happy."¹

Jean-Jacques called Mme. Récamier his *Aristarchus* and his Muse. She was in any case his best friend. Whilst he was teaching at Marseilles, near to his "demi-Greeks," as Albert Stapfer said, she was serving as intermediary in a combination according to which Jean-Jacques was to superintend the literary part of the paper *Le Temps*.²

The two Ampères returned to Paris in July, 1830. Jean-Jacques was sent for to fill the place of Fauriel in the chair of Foreign Literature at the Paris University. He left his post to the poet Brizeux.³ He had at last triumphed over the melancholy inclinations of his youth, and he declared himself perfectly happy.⁴

He did not find his friend Sautelet on his return to Paris. The young publisher had killed himself a few months after the founding of the *National*. Chateaubriand gives him a rather brief funeral oration in his *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*.⁵ But this suicide greatly affected the Liberal party. It was on this occasion that Armand Carrel wrote the fine article which appeared in the *Revue de Paris* of June 1830, entitled *Une mort volontaire*.⁶ Mme. Récamier knew Sautelet intimately. He used to confide in her, and she was very much affected by his death.⁷

M. Récamier had died in April.⁸ Until his last day he remained the pleasant, careless man we have known. "On losing him," writes Mme. Lenormant in a somewhat mysterious phrase, "Mme. Récamier felt as though she were losing her father for the second time." She went away to Dieppe at the end of June. Chateaubriand joined her there.⁹ He found her with Lacordaire, then in all the ardour of his conversion.

¹ Unpublished letter, from copy belonging to M. de Loménie.

² See Ballanche's letter, *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 20.

³ Tamisier, work quoted, p. 58.

⁴ *Heures de poésie*, p. 18.

⁵ V, pp. 256-257.

⁶ Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, VI, pp. 102 and 103.

⁷ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 286.

⁸ Sour. et Corr., II, p. 383 and following. See a letter from Ballanche on the death of M. Récamier in Cabanès, *Le cabinet secret de l'histoire*, 2nd series, *Le cas de Mme. Récamier*.

⁹ Sour. et Corr., II, p. 387.

Chateaubriand would certainly not have left Paris if he had foreseen the grave events which were about to take place there. On the 25th of July, Charles X signed the famous Decrees; on the 26th, the journalists met in the offices of the *National*; on the 27th, the struggle began in the street; on the 28th, Lafayette's provisional Government was installed at the Hôtel de Ville, and on the following day Marmont left Paris. Chateaubriand had started for Dieppe on the 26th.¹ "I was rather gay," he writes, "quite delighted at the thought of going to the sea again, and I was followed only a few hours after by a fearful storm. . . . I arrived the following day, the 27th, at Dieppe towards noon. . . . I dressed and went to find Mme. Récamier. She had rooms, the windows of which looked out over the sea-shore. I stayed a few hours there, talking and watching the waves. Suddenly Hyacinthe arrived, bringing me a letter that M. de Boissy had received, announcing the Decrees in terms of high praise. A moment later my old friend Ballanche came in; he had just left the diligence, and had the newspapers in his hand." Chateaubriand started at once back to Paris. He has given, in the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, a long account of the sight which he witnessed, and has even published the letter he wrote on the 29th of July, 1830, to Mme. Récamier.² This interesting document has also been given in the *Souvenirs et Correspondance*.³ In both works, though, the text is abridged, but, thanks to a copy of it kept by Ballanche, we are able to quote it entirely.

"I am writing to you, although I do not know whether my letter will arrive, as the couriers are not leaving.

"I entered Paris in the midst of cannonading, firing, and the tocsin. This morning the tocsin is still ringing, but I do not hear any more shooting. It appears that things are being organized, and that the resistance will continue until the Decrees are recalled. All this is the immediate result, without speaking of the definitive result, of the perjury for which the Crown gets the credit, thanks to horrible Ministers. The National Guard, the Polytechnical School, are all mixed up

¹ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 268.

² V, p. 274 and following.

³ II, p. 388 and following.

in it. I have not seen anyone yet. You can imagine the state in which I found Mme. de Chateaubriand. Persons who saw the 10th of August and the 2nd of September, as she did, do not lose the impression of the terror of it all. The fifth regiment of the line has already passed over to the side of the Charter. Certainly M. de Polignac, with his Ministry, is the greatest culprit who has ever existed. His incapacity is a poor excuse. The ambition for which one has not the necessary talents is a crime. I hear that the Court is at Saint-Cloud, and prepared to leave.

“I am not telling you anything about myself. My position is painful but clear. The *tricoloured flag* is hoisted. I can only recognize the *white flag*. I will not betray the King any more than the Charter, nor legitimate authority any more than liberty. I have nothing to say or do, then, but to wait and to mourn over my country.

“In spite of my extreme desire to see you, in spite of the fact that everything is wanting, as far as I am concerned, during your absence—happiness for living and air for breathing—stay where you are, wait a few days; I will write to you every day. It would be very difficult for me, with Mme. de Chateaubriand in such a state of terror, to leave and go to you, so stay there until *fresh orders*. God knows now what will happen in the provinces; an insurrection is already being talked of at Rouen. On the other hand, the Congregation will arm the Chouans and Vendée. On what do empires depend? A Decree and six wretched Ministers without any genius, or without virtue, suffice to make of the most tranquil and flourishing country the most disturbed and unhappy country.”

“Noon.

“The firing has recommenced. It appears that they are attacking the Exchange, where the King’s troops are lodged. The Faubourg where I live is beginning to rise; a provisional Government is talked of, at the head of which would be General Gérard, the Duc de Choiseul, and M. de la Fayette.

“It is probable that this letter will not go, as Paris has been declared in a state of siege. Marshal Marmont is

commanding for the King. It is rumoured that he has been killed, but I do not believe it. Try not to be over-anxious. May God protect you. We shall meet again."

"*Friday.*

"This letter was written yesterday, but it could not go. Everything is over and the popular victory complete. The King gives in on all points, but I am afraid now that they will go far beyond the Crown concessions. I wrote this morning to his Majesty. For my future I have an entire plan of sacrifices which I like. We will talk it all over when you arrive.

"I am going to post this letter myself and take a survey of Paris. In the midst of all this I have time to love you, and that is the only time I reckon in life."¹ Mme. Récamier returned to Paris on the 30th of July, accompanied by Ampère. The streets were blocked with barricades.² On the 31st of July, Chateaubriand, on learning of her arrival, sent her a short letter telling her that he had been dragged in triumph through the streets, and that he was about to play a great rôle.³ Ballanche had come back with Sainte-Beuve. "At the news of the Decrees," writes Sainte-Beuve,⁴ "I started in haste from Honfleur, where I had been staying with my friend Ulric Guttinguer, in order to return to Paris. M. Ballanche, who was at Dieppe with Mme. Récamier, left also for the capital. We met at Rouen, and travelled back together in the same diligence. The journey was a very slow one, interrupted at every relay by all sorts of incidents. On the way travellers kept getting in and out all the time. M. Ballanche, I must own, seemed most easy and impartial about the news that kept arriving every instant from Paris, the result of which was no longer doubtful. 'I fancy,' I said to him, 'that this time we are going to clear two initiative steps at one time.' Whereupon he began to laugh."

According to Mme. Lenormant, "the July Revolution

¹ According to Ballanche's copy, *Biog. inédit de Mme. R.*, p. 323 and following.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 387-388.

³ Second volume of letters to Mme. Récamier, No. I. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 390 and 391.

⁴ *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 32, note 1.

appeared to Mme. Récamier a grievous and fatal event."¹ It seems, though, that we ought not to exaggerate the sorrow that the fall of the elder branch of the Bourbons caused her. She had given all her sympathy to the Liberal party, faithful at the same time to the teachings of Mme. de Staél and to her own preference for the more moderate governments. The Duchesse de Montmorency frequently reproached her rather keenly with this. She was following Chateaubriand in the efforts and inconstancies of his policy. How could she fail, too, to be influenced by her younger friends? Charles Lenormant "welcomed with all the enthusiasm of youth the perspective of an order of things in which a larger place should be accorded to liberty."² Ampère, who was a friend of Carrel, Thiers, and Mignet, said he, was a Republican.³ A drawing-room Republican, no doubt—quite a Platonic Republican. Sainte-Beuve jeered at this profession of faith which did not act, this Liberal "to whom nothing was wanting when he had only to exhale his ardour in the Abbaye *salon* before Mme. Swetchine or the Duc de Laval."⁴ "Politics like this," he says again, "are like a maiden's virtue, all the more chaste because it is never touched or put to the proof."⁵ All the same, Ampère had not concealed his opinions in his lectures at the Marseilles Athénée, and the Abbaye was far from disapproving him. The worthy Ballanche had drawn from the events of 1830 this conclusion: that progress proceeds by the way of revolution and not by the way of evolution.⁶ He published, that very year, four volumes of his works. Lerminier praised him in the *Globe*. The philosopher was at this time in great distress. He was obliged to take steps which were very repugnant to his delicacy. "I have asked M. de Barante," he writes,⁷ "to sound the Minister of the Interior, or the Minister of Public Instruction, in order to find out whether it would be possible to persuade them to take a certain number of copies. He was

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 392.

² *Ibid.*, p. 393.

³ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 287.

⁴ *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, p. 247.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 393.

⁷ Letters to various persons. Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

kind enough to come and see me yesterday, to tell me that the funds are exhausted for 1830, and that nothing could be taken except on the receipts of 1831. I certainly think I shall have a few subscriptions from there, but not anything important and, above all, it will not be ready money. I certainly am very vexed, but all the same I still think that I was right in starting on this enterprise. . . . The question is to know whether my name is to live; if it is not to live I have given myself a great deal of trouble for nothing."

The Duc de Laval was in Paris during the three days. He gave up his office as Ambassador and his title as peer.¹ He was then sixty-three years of age, and was destined to end his days in private life. He left immediately for Aix, where twenty years before he had stayed with Mme. Récamier.² The future, as far as politics were concerned, seemed to him obscure and to be dreaded. He complained of everything being sacrificed "in the name of liberty to speak and write." He had more anxiety about all this than rancour. "I hope I am mistaken," he declared in his letter of the 17th October,³ "and I have not the foolish pride of preferring the poor advantage of being right to the peace of the world." He crossed Mont Cenis and went to stay at Genoa, intending to make his winter quarters in Florence.

The day following the July Revolution, Auguste Barbier returned to the Abbaye. It was there that he made the acquaintance of the worthy old Ballanche, whose portrait he has sketched.⁴ Sainte-Beuve had been presented to Chateaubriand by Villemain in 1829, just when the Ambassador was leaving for Rome.⁵ He had already published at that date his *Tableau de la poésie française au seizième siècle*, *Les Poésies de Joseph Delorme*, and articles in the *Globe* and in the *Revue de Paris*. Chateaubriand appeared to have every chance of becoming Minister again and President of the Council. Sainte-Beuve had seen him again several times after his return from Rome. He tried to make him give up his prejudices with regard to romanticism. In March, 1830, when the

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 394.

² See his letter of September 5th, 1830, *ibid.*, II, p. 394 and following.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ *Souv. personnels*, p. 312.

⁵ *Portr. cont.*, I, p. 75 and following.

Consolations appeared, the illustrious writer sent the young poet his sincere compliments and a little advice. The Abbaye followed with interest the progress of an author whom it would have liked, perhaps, to maintain in the respect of sanctioned glories. In April, 1830, Lenormant wrote to Ampère : "Sainte-Beuve seems to me to have taken a high stand in his *Consolations*,"¹ but the Revolution of 1830 interrupted this friendly intercourse. "Chateaubriand's friends," writes Sainte-Beuve,² "were not very well pleased with a little article of mine that appeared in *Le Globe* of August 19th, 1830, in which, whilst congratulating Victor Hugo on rallying to the new France, I accepted on the other hand, as an accomplished and legitimate fact, the political abdication of M. de Chateaubriand. The friends of the latter, Mme. Récamier, M. Lenormant, thought that was going a little too quickly, as they did not yet despair of seeing him once more attached to the new order of things. I was two or three years without seeing M. de Chateaubriand after this." The incident delayed Sainte-Beuve's introduction to the Abbaye, where he was awaited and where later on he was to play so important a rôle.

The fact was that Chateaubriand became more exacting day by day. Events succeeded each other quickly, without his collaborating in them. The Duc d'Orléans had been appointed Lieutenant-General of the kingdom. Charles X had gone into exile. The Charter was revised. Louis-Philippe I was proclaimed King of France on the 9th of August, and Chateaubriand's protestations in the Chamber of Peers had no more effect than those of Hyde de Neuville or of Martignac in the Chamber of Deputies. Chateaubriand's conduct was not wanting in grandeur. It was in the difficult circumstances of life that he was quite himself, with his passion for fidelity and his worship of honour. "During the short interval from the 3rd to the 7th of August," says Villemain,³ "I saw, at Mme. Récamier's, M. de Chateaubriand being entreated in the most kindly way by a man of great name and learning, who was then Knight of Honour to the

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 285.

² *Portr. cont.*, I, p. 77.

³ *Chateaubriand*, p. 493.

Duchesse d'Orléans. It was a question of a visit to the royal palace. M. de Chateaubriand accepted willingly. The interview that he had, and which he relates, has to-day no other witness than an august Princess whose dignity has received the consecration of all royal and domestic griefs." Chateaubriand sacrificed himself "once more for the sake of an ungrateful family,"¹ and prepared to leave France, remaining faithful to his oaths. He resigned to the hands of Pasquier his pension of twelve thousand francs as peer; he sent to Dupont de l'Eure his resignation as State Minister. There was a certain elegance in this proceeding, although it might be wanting in simplicity. Chateaubriand was sacrificing himself to a cause that he did not approve.² He resisted the seductive offers made to him by the new régime. He did not wish to resemble the "Judases of the Chamber of Peers."

At the end of 1830 the trial of the Ministers of Charles X greatly excited public opinion. At the Abbaye everyone admired Martignac for coming, dying as he was and with no strength left, to the help of his former adversaries.³ The Duchesse d'Abrantès went several times each afternoon to Mme. Récamier's, as the news always arrived there. On the day of the sentence, a letter from Chateaubriand announced to Mme. Récamier and her friends that the Ministers were saved from the popular fury.

Benjamin Constant died on the 8th of December.⁴ Alfred de Vigny went to his funeral, and devoted this short funeral oration to him in his *Journal*:⁵ "He was a man of superior intelligence. He fought always without recompense, which I esteem. But I think he had a very ambitious aim, which he never attained. . . . He had a rather noble profile, polite and gracious manners; he was a man of the world and a man of letters, a rare alliance and an exquisite mixture. I fancy he had a cold heart and no imagination."

¹ Letter to M. Fraser Frisell; Biré, *Les dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 30.

² See his letter to M. Frisell, work quoted, p. 36.

³ Duchesse d'Abrantès, *Mémoires sur la Restauration*, VI, p. 581 and following.

⁴ See Coulmann, *Réminiscences*, III, p. 219.

⁵ *Journal d'un poète*, pp. 52-53.

Ballanche, when announcing the sad news to Mme. Récamier, commented on it in his own way :

"One of the most distinguished minds of our times has entered on a new series of trials. He has gone to complete himself. M. Melio told me the news without any details. It appears that it was yesterday evening, at the very time when you were expressing your interest in him. Poor Benjamin Constant lived a few months too long. But I fancy that people will be more inclined to render justice to him now. I hope the Academy will repent its unworthy severity. This is another representative of our past who has gone away into a definitive past."¹

Chateaubriand had joked about Benjamin Constant following "the royal candidate in a sedan-chair, rocked about by two Savoyards."² He respected his tomb. At this time he had to struggle with difficulties of all kinds. He was once more short of money, and in order to keep his engagements he had to finish his *Études historiques*. In March, 1831, a proposal was laid before the Chamber of Deputies by Baude for the banishment of Charles X. Chateaubriand wrote within a few days his pamphlet on the Restoration and Elective Monarchy.³ On the 4th of April he brought out his *Études historiques*. In his preface he modified, out of consideration to Mme. Récamier, the criticisms he had written earlier on Mme. de Staél.⁴ After this he sold his furniture and then started with Mme. de Chateaubriand for Switzerland. He left a power of attorney in Paris for selling his house.⁵

Chateaubriand published, in his *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, the little note that he sent from Lyons to his friend on the 18th of May, and his longer letter of the 20th of May. He wrote again from Lyons and as soon as he arrived at Geneva.⁶ The letters are in the tone we have heard so frequently ; there is the same melancholy and charming turn. He begs to see the "small handwriting," and he protests that he is sad. "Still another future," he says ; "to have to begin once

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection, dated Thursday morning.

² M.O.T., V, pp. 343 and 344.

³ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 38.

⁴ Mentioned by Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. de femmes*, p. 125.

⁵ M.O.T., IV, p. 430. ⁶ *Ibid.*, V, p. 431 and following.

more a life that I thought I had finished.”¹ Ballanche, in his manuscript biography of Mme. Récamier, has preserved another letter for us of the same epoch, much more important and much longer than those used in the *Mémoires*.

From Geneva, on Friday, May 27th, 1831, Chateaubriand wrote to Mme. Récamier as follows :

“The life I am leading will perhaps change, for if it were to continue like this I could not endure it long. I pass over the household worries, the private troubles, which are greatly increased, etc., etc., and I arrive at the higher, but none the less sad, side of the situation.

“ You know the reasons which made me leave France, and you approve them, because everything that is noble and dignified is understood by you. This is one of the great reasons, among a thousand others, for which I love you. Unfortunately, France is deteriorating in this respect, and things of honour are beginning to escape her. I had said and written that if the legitimacy I had so often proclaimed were driven from France I should again go away with it, and public esteem only cares for engagements that are kept, above all when these are sacrifices. I therefore wished to be consistent with myself, but I am more and more saddened by what is going on in France. One must live abroad in order to see to what a degree our country is lowered in the opinion of other nations. It seems that they despair of our courage, just as I despair of our liberty when I see this younger generation, which seemed so promising, insensible to the honour of France, preaching the happy medium and peace at any price—that is, with the thrashing of the nations which had risen in our name—and liberty with sub-prefectures and posts of inspectors in the universities and of clerks in literature ; on the other side the beauties of the Convention and the admiration of the axe ! And yet what things there are to be done in France and by this France, even with the bastard royalty of Philippe ! For the last six months we ought to have been masters of the world and to have given our hand to that heroic Poland, the advance guard of France. Liberty, with order and civilization for all nations, would have been

¹ Letter of May 24th.

the fruit of our victories, or rather it would have sufficed for us to rise and to wave our flag in order to have a frontier which is wanting, and to break the chains of nations which are friends, but—the stocks would have fallen ; there would have been petty home troubles ; such and such a man would not have been Minister, and another individual would not have been office boy ; royalty would have been afraid. It is for such wretched considerations that men without genius and with no heart sacrifice our country, and liberty, to exist will be obliged to do without glory. I doubt whether this *bourgeois* liberty, this liberty of theory, of the gallery, and of talk, will ever be popular in our country. The Franks planted liberty in a camp ; it has kept, among Frenchmen, the taste for and the love of its cradle. . . . And do not imagine that they will change : the evil is in their blood ; the fault is in their mind ; they are wanting in elevation. Now this quality cannot be cultivated by those who do not possess it ; they do not even feel it ; they consider everything generous as mere folly. . . . I do not pretend that from this sort of administration a certain material prosperity does not ensue. Liberty belittled, the absence of all noble and generous sentiments, the abnegation of all grandeur, form a kind of mild slavery, of mediocre views, in harmony with the ordinary ideas of the crowd. Tradespeople see the stocks rise and begin to get back a little activity ; society people are no longer interfered with in their *soirées*. What a calamity that great strong life of a nation is which disturbs drawing-room life and interrupts Court balls ! But anyhow I shall not be a witness of this rare happiness, and shall not trouble it by my grim looks. To be in France for the sake of making opposition would not suit me. I fancy I might hurt people very much, but to whose advantage ? I despise what now is, but I do not know what is going to be. If there should be war or any great home calamity, I should return to share the fate of my country. If things remain as they are, exile is my lot. But this exile depends on you : in spite of all I have just said, if you stay in France, as I cannot live without you, I shall go and offer to a Government that I do not esteem hands that you will have bound. I shall return to my

infirmary, and a few hours of your presence will console me for all the worries of the day and for all that will be painful in my false position. I beseech you, do not let there be any generosity. Recall me; tell me that you cannot come, for what could I offer you? Where shall we go? We cannot stay in Switzerland. Italy, which is so suitable for people with shattered lives, is not open to us in a befitting way. Think it over, then, whether you could share this wandering life, break away from your habits and customs, from your friends, from that society of which you are the soul and the charm. It is not for you to leave everything for me, it is my place to overcome all my dislikes and all the obstacles of my life in order to go to you. Away from you I shall have heart-ache, with you in France I shall only be disturbed in my mind. Is this to be compared to the other? Since you are destined to survive me, it is not to you but to myself that I make a present by giving you the few years that remain to me. What a long letter! Another time I will tell you of our establishment here. M. and Mme. Sismondi have been to fetch us. We were out, but shall go to see them and thank them next Sunday."¹

Chateaubriand was deceiving himself. His views on foreign politics were wanting in perspicacity. In order to prove this, his friend had only to communicate to him the letters that she received from Prussia. They are curious when compared with Chateaubriand's enthusiastic declarations.

Prince Augustus kept Mme. Récamier posted about the political situation in Germany. He wrote to her from Berlin on the 20th of February, 1831 :

"France's great armaments appear in opposition to the pacific intentions of the Ministry, and compel us to prepare for all events. Peace or war depends on France. Prussia does not want war, but 300,000 Prussians are ready to march if anyone ventures to attack us, to infringe the newly recognized treaties, or to make any conquests which threaten the equilibrium of Europe. All Germany would rise *en masse* to support us, and 200,000 Russians on the Vistula would

¹ According to Ballanche's copy, *Biogr. inéd. de Mme. R.*, p. 327 and following.

serve us as reserve. It appears that people have false notions about the spirit that reigns in Germany. Discontent here and there, excited more or less by the managing committee and by money coming from abroad, has caused some movements which have not lasted long, and which would never have come to anything if several small Governments had shown justice and energy. Foreign aggression would in the first place draw everyone together, because Germany, and above all Prussia, wants to assert its independence and its military glory bought with so much blood. I hope, though, that the clouds which now cover the political horizon will soon disperse, as it is to no one's interest to have war. According to all probability, the insurrection in Poland will soon be over, and I very much regret the blood which will flow without any likelihood of success. It is to be hoped that the prompt termination of this war will strengthen the tranquillity of Europe.¹

On the 22nd of September of the same year, the Prince wrote again :

" If war does not break out this autumn with France, I think, dear Juliette, that for this year at least you need not fear this malady for Paris.² I believe strongly in peace, if only the present Government and Ministry can be maintained. The glorious end in Poland, the certainty that war would bring cholera into France, and cause necessarily a naval war which would ruin your commerce, make you lose your colonies, and cause State bankruptcy, are important motives in favour of this opinion. But if the revolutionary party should win the day, I consider war inevitable and France threatened with the horrors of 1793. The weakness that the Ministry has shown in the question of the hereditary peerage inspires just fears for the future. If you were to experience unfortunate events, you would find a refuge here, where you would be sheltered from the storm, and an affectionate friendship which has never flagged."³

But Chateaubriand yielded, as usual, to the caprices of his imagination. The Geneva newspapers flattered him, and he exchanged courtesies with the Protestants. He composed in

¹ Unpublished letter, No. 101 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² The cholera.

³ Unpublished letter, No. 100 of the series.

honour of Mme. Récamier that piece of poetry which he has inserted in his *Mémoires*.¹ He continued to protest against the "Government of cowards" into whose hands his country had fallen, and he gave himself up to his spleen.²

He corresponded, too, with Ballanche. The old Lyonesse philosopher saw his ideas launched in France and even abroad. Under the title of *Vision d'Hébal, chef d'un clan écossais*, in 1831³ he had printed and distributed amongst his friends an episode taken from *La Ville des Expiations*. Barchou de Penhoen devoted an article to him in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. This article, excellent on the whole with regard to the interpretation of Ballanche's thought, contained some errors. For instance, the theosophist had never written, as he was made to say, that the unity of the human kind must finish by the absorption of all human individualities. According to his ideas, progress must bring about, merely by natural effect, the gradual substitution of charity for solidarity, in the same way that the dogma of Providence must be substituted for that of destiny. Now, according to Ballanche, solidarity leads us to a forced unity, whilst charity leads us to a voluntary unity. The historical system of the Lyonesse philosopher was all in a piece with this. It rested entirely on the dogma of decay and rehabilitation; it was this that Barchou had in part ignored.⁴

Young Ozaman, who had just published in pamphlet form his *Reflexions sur la doctrine de Saint-Simon*, was partially at any rate with Ballanche's system.⁵ These ideas were also attracting attention abroad. We have a proof of this in a long letter that Edouard Gans, Hegel's friend and publisher, wrote to Mme. Récamier on the 21st of December, 1830. Mme. Récamier had sent to the Berlin jurisconsult four volumes of Ballanche's works.

"One certainly finds frequently in our times," he answers, "writers who are aware that a movement is taking place, that

¹ V, pp. 436-437.

² Letter of June 18th, *M.O.T.*, pp. 437 and 438. Kerviler (*Bio-bibl. de Chateaubriand*, pp. 60-61) quotes an important letter from Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier, June 26th, 1831. ³ Paris, Didot ainé, 122 pages in-8.

⁴ Ballanche gives an explanation in a long letter to M. de Lavergne which has never been published. (No. 167 of the collection of Ballanche's letters belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie.) ⁵ *Lettres*, I, pp. 3, 59.

progress is being prepared, that we must not go backwards, but forwards. When they are convinced, though, of the truth of what they are advancing, they are beaten by their own victory ; for, having neither depth, nor ideas capable of constructing, they fall back themselves into complete nullity. There are others who, nurtured in the substantial sentiments of religion and history, cannot conceive that the dialectic march of movement is itself essentially religious. They only see God in fixity, in the immutable. They blaspheme him every day in what is new, believing that they adore him sufficiently in the past. These men lose, by their stationary spirit, the advantage they have over their adversaries in a depth which is wanting in them. There are only very few who like the progress of humanity from religious reasons, whose faith does not suffer in any way by events, who are fortified in their worship, confirmed in their religion, who see God ahead in all that is being done, never separating him from liberty and from movement. M. Ballanche belongs to this latter class, which counts so few adherents and which on account of its depth is much more admired than understood. As for me, I adopt, and with inmost conviction, M. Ballanche's ideas which bear on the philosophy of history. . . Yes, Christianity is the essentially emancipating and plebeian religion, so that all the progress of humanity, all the liberties acquired during centuries, are only the development of Christianity. With it history ceased and commenced at the same time. It ceased because the principle from which everything was to issue was found, because nothing fresh could work. It commenced because the development of humanity only dates from this principle, because, as the possibility of everything was revealed, the reality was not yet accomplished.”¹

Chateaubriand did not discuss such grave problems with Ballanche. He thanked him in high terms for his *Vision d'Hébal*. “ You have explained to me,” he said, “ God before the creation, the creation before man, the intellectual creation of the latter, then his union with matter by his fall, when he thought he was making his own fate by his

¹ Unpublished letter, from the collection of letters from foreigners to Mme. R. M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.

will."¹ He dwelt above all on the political situation of France.² In August he was preparing to leave Switzerland, as the following letter to Ballanche proves:

“ GENEVA, *August 10th.*

“ Your letter, my dear friend, alarms me. I shall expect a line that will be more reassuring. As a climax of misfortune my wife is in bed, and I myself so unwell that I can scarcely write. I have the most frightful internal pains. If it were not for this I should start. Just a line, I beg. I wrote the day before yesterday to our excellent friend and to you. Yours, etc.”³

In September Chateaubriand returned to Paris to try to sell his house. He only stayed a few days,⁴ and then returned to Geneva, but he was sent for again with reference to the Baude affair. The Comte de Briquerville had taken up again, whilst exaggerating it, the proposal that the Chamber of Deputies had once adopted. Chateaubriand required to be in Paris in order to have his pamphlet against Briquerville's project printed. On the 31st of October, Lenormant published the opuscule entitled: “The new proposal relative to the banishment of Charles X and his family, or conclusion of my last publication: From the Restoration to Elective Monarchy.”

Chateaubriand⁵ found the Abbaye-aux-Bois divided by

¹ Mme. Lenormant simplifies this phrase. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 400. *Lettres de Chateaubriand*, Vol. II, p. 3 and following, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

² See his letters to Ballanche dated July 31st (*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 400; Biré, work quoted, p. 67.), August 3rd (*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 401; Biré, work quoted, p. 68). The originals are in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. *Lettres de Chateaubriand*, Vol. II, p. 14; address, Mme. Récamier, post-mark Geneva, August 10th, 1831.

⁴ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 69 and following.

⁵ On the 11th of November, 1831, Chateaubriand wrote as follows from Paris to Ch. de Constant: “Your observations on the French character are excellent, and you judge the present state of European society very correctly. As to my pamphlet, the result has been more active and prolonged than I expected. The state of opinion is shown you by the papers. The *Débats* is silent out of decency. The *Messageur* and *La Nouvelle France*, two other Ministerial papers, insult me; all the other papers, Royalistic and Liberal, are for me and have been singing hymns. . . I have no intention of remaining in France. I have only come here to fire a cannon in honour of the white flag and to expose myself as a courageous

various shades of opinion, but these divergencies did not compromise that harmony which was so much to Mme. Récamier. Charles Lenormant was a friend of Guizot. When Louis-Philippe, on the 11th August, 1830, had formed his first Ministry, in which Dupont de l'Eure and Laffite represented movement, Guizot, Casimir Perier, and Molé resistance, Charles Lenormant had received a post at the Beaux-Arts.¹ He followed Guizot in his retreat and entered, in 1832, the medal department of the Royal Library,² after the formation of the Cabinet of October 11th. Ampère, more ardent and more enthusiastic, tried to persuade Chateaubriand to guide the young Liberals.³ The Comtesse de Boigne, one of Mme. Récamier's most intimate friends, was bound by an affection of long standing to Queen Marie-Amélie.⁴ Chateaubriand left the *Journal des Débats*. Sainte-Beuve treated him rather freely in an article he wrote in September, 1831, on the Abbé Prévost. "A very great part of the glory of Walter Scott and of Chateaubriand is already plunged into the shade," he said.⁵ Mme. Récamier had a great deal to do in these delicate circumstances, in the midst of over-excited passions, to manage everyone's pride and appease all rancour.

In 1831 she received a new arrival, whose name was already celebrated in the world of letters. George Sand had refused to have any intercourse with the Abbaye. On the 12th of February, 1831, she wrote from Paris to Jules Boucoiran : "I have been invited to Kératry's and to Mme. Récamier's. I had the good sense to refuse."⁶ Honoré de Balzac showed less independence. Etienne Delécluze witnessed his introduction there, and gives us an account of it in his *Souvenirs de soixante années*.⁷ One evening a young, thick-set man with a common face, but a very animated expression and such a delighted

man to the reprisal." On the 27th of November, 1831, there was another letter from the same to the same. "I do not recognize anything of what exists in France." Public Library, Geneva, McC. No. 20, letters from Chateaubriand and from the Vicomtesse de Chateaubriand to Ch. de Constant and the ladies of his family. See Menos, Introduction to the *Lettres de B.C. à sa famille*.

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 402.

² *Notice sur Charles Lenormant*, by Wallon, p. 21.
³ See the letter which Chateaubriand wrote him (Biré, work quoted, p. 62 and following).

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 404.

⁵ *Portr. litt.*, I, p. 266.

⁶ *Revue des Deux Mondes*, January 15th, 1881, p. 408.

⁷ Pp. 284-285.

look that he reminded one of Rabelais, arrived at the Abbaye with the Duchesse d'Abrantès. Delécluze even maintained that Balzac showed a "candid joy" at being introduced to the celebrated beauty, and that the excess of his satisfaction would have seemed a trifle ridiculous if it had not been very sincere.

According to certain indications, Balzac read *La Peau de Chagrin* at Mme. Récamier's in 1831.¹ Certain biographers even assure us that, to paint the portrait of the Comtesse Fœdora, Balzac had taken Juliette as his model. Between Mme. Récamier and the Comtesse Fœdora some curious resemblances have been pointed out.² But the case here is the same as for the Delphine of Mme. de Stael; the prodigious imagination of Balzac borrowed from everywhere. There is no doubt that in writing *La Peau de Chagrin* he remembered certain details of Mme. Récamier's biography, her entertainments under the Consulate, for instance. Fœdora is an enigma; she did not give herself to any particular one of her friends in order to keep them all. She talks about passion "with the coolness of an advocate, of a notary"; she fears the "ravages of maternity." If, with these characteristics, Balzac meant to represent Mme. Récamier he would only have given us a caricature. His friendly intercourse with the Abbaye authorizes us to think that he painted according to his fancy in perfect liberty. Even if he did not read his novel to Mme. Récamier, it is difficult to admit that he intended to represent her in it just as she was.

¹ G. Lanson, *Revue Bleue* of May 4th, 1895. Balzac, *Corr.*, Vol. XXIV of the *Oeuvres complètes—Lettres à l'étrangère*, *Revue de Paris*, February 1st and 15th, March 1st and December 1st, 1894; January 1st, February 1st, and March 1st, 1895.

² J. Turquan, *Madame Récamier*, p. 359 and following.

CHAPTER XXII

THE READINGS OF THE “MÉMOIRES” (FROM THE END OF 1831 TO THE END OF 1834)

The article by the Duchesse d’Abrantès.—Mme. Récamier’s influence.—Chateaubriand’s arrest (June 16th, 1832).—His departure for Switzerland (August 8th).—Mme. Récamier joins him at Constance.—Visit to Arenenberg.—Ballanche’s letters.—Sojourn at Geneva.—Letters from Mme. Récamier to J. J. Ampère.—Chateaubriand’s return to Paris (November 17th).—His journey to Prague (May 14th—June 5th, 1833).—His journey to Venice and to Prague (September 3rd—October 6th).—The letters to Mme. Récamier.—The readings of the *Mémoires* (February 1834).—Sainte-Beuve and the Abbaye ; the article on Chateaubriand (April 15th) ; the article on Ballanche (September 16th) and its consequences.—Chateaubriand at Fontainebleau (November).

THE history is well known of that curious work, *Paris, ou le livre des Cent et un*, the first volume of which was published by Ladvocat in 1832. A large number of literary men and women wishing to offer to a publisher, who was in difficult circumstances, a proof of their interest, decided to come to his help by each of them giving him at least two chapters for a work which was to be a kind of *Diable boiteux*. In the first volume of the publication, between a study by Henry Monnier and an article by Salvandy, the Duchesse d’Abrantès gave a long description of life at the Abbaye. She made out, as it were, the list of Mme. Récamier’s usual guests. We already know most of them.¹ There are, however, a few fresh arrivals : Gustave Drouineau, for instance, whose reputation was so brilliant at the time he

¹ In the *Quinzaine* for August 16th, 1902, M. Victor du Bled gave a study of the *salons* of the July monarchy. He classes the Abbaye-aux-Bois among the aristocratic and upper middle class *salons*.

was publishing his Neo-Christian novels. *Ernest ou les Travers du siècle* is no longer read, but, in 1829, the five volumes of this work had made quite a sensation through their violent attack on the university teaching. Elisa Mercœur, at the age of eighteen, had published a first collection of poems which had been admired by Lamartine. The second edition had increased her fame and, after the July Revolution, which had deprived her of the pensions she owed to the Duchesse de Berry and to Martignac, she had taken refuge with Mme. Récamier, who continued to protect and help her. The Duc de Noailles, too, had obtained an introduction and, since the spring of 1822, frequented the Abbaye.¹ The future historian of Mme. de Maintenon, the agreeable and upright man who later on was to succeed Chateaubriand at the Academy, took almost immediately a privileged position in Mme. Récamier's circle. "Thanks to the care the Duc de Noailles took to introduce his own people to Mme. Récamier, he and his family were soon on intimate terms with her, and held a position in her society very similar to that which the Montmorencys had for so long a time occupied."² Mme. de Genlis was just then trying to make up for her faults with regard to Mme. Récamier by publishing her insipid story of *Athénais*.³

Although Mme. Récamier was attentive to the fresh comers, whom she welcomed as new elements for enlivening her society, her affection from henceforth was fixed and concentrated on the person of Chateaubriand. Sainte-Beuve has described admirably, in his quality of a witness who for a long time was under the spell himself, the kind of worship which Chateaubriand received at the Abbaye. "It was the characteristic of Mme. Récamier's extremely capable mind to be at the time world-wide and very individual, to exclude nothing—how can I describe it—to attract all and yet to have the choice. This choice may even seem unique. M. de Chateaubriand during the last twenty years was the great centre of her world, the great interest of her life, the man to whom I will not say that she sacrificed everyone else (for she

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 439.

² *Ibid.*, p. 440.

³ See Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. de femmes*, p. 145.

never sacrificed anyone but herself), but to whom she subordinated everyone. He had his antipathies, his aversions, and even his bitternesses, to which the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* testify sufficiently. She tempered and corrected all that. Every day she had a thousand graceful inventions for renewing and refreshing praise. She beat up fresh friends and admirers from everywhere. She chained us all to the feet of her statue with a golden chain."¹

At the Abbaye, Chateaubriand became pleasant, smiling, and gay. He consented to abandon there that melancholy in which he wrapped himself and of which he was proud. He let himself be drawn into conversations.

Sainte-Beuve, in a very familiar style, gives us an account of one of these conversations.²

"Ampère had just returned from Rome,"³ he writes: "he had not yet seen M. de Chateaubriand, but he had scarcely shaken hands when endless news about the Eternal City was poured out: the excavations, the Coliseum, that group of trees near St. John's, Lateran, the beautiful and unexpected view of the country from the St. Pancrace Gate, and those nameless ruins piled up called Roma Vecchia! M. de Chateaubriand remembered everything: he told about his walks in those austere plains, every knoll and every corner of which he knows as well and better than he knows our Montrouge plain. I listened, seeing in these long accounts the exact picture of places which had witnessed immortal things. . . . The Duc de Laval arrived, and as soon as he had shaken hands with Ampère he asked him whom he had seen—not what things, what ruins, but what persons, what diplomats. . . . M. de Chateaubriand observed quietly to Mme. Récamier that the character of people showed itself by their first questions. Then conversation turned on to present society, on the use one should make of one's faculties and life. M. de Chateaubriand took up the subject eloquently and, always with the picture of Rome in the background, he exhorted us

¹ *Causeries du Lundi*, I, pp. 134–135. Compare Mme. Ancelot, *Un salon de Paris*, p. 148. ² *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, I, pp. 407 and 408.

³ Probably in 1834. See *Mme. R. et les amis*. . . p. 291 and following. Read too Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, III, p. 82, the account of an amusing conversation on style between Chateaubriand, Ballanche, and Delécluze.

younger men not to waste ourselves in everyday deeds which take up all the time and are useless. He said that the best way to help the future, in moments of transition and decomposition, or of intermediary social recomposition like that of our times, was to devote one's self to the past that was not yet abolished, to history under its varied forms ; to endeavour to reproduce and to paint all that, the memory of which would otherwise soon fade away. If under the emperors in Rome this had been done, what souvenirs would have been preserved of the finest times and of the most illustrious characters ! He was eloquent, sincere, full of sense and gravity when he talked like this. I ought to have noted down all his words as soon as I had heard them. It was a sort of historical inspiration that came to him from the Roman ruins, to which his imagination had taken him back."

It was at Mme. Récamier's that Lamennais renewed his intercourse with Chateaubriand, whom he had not hitherto cared much for. Ballanche brought about the meeting, and Sainte-Beuve, who was present, gives us an account of it.¹ "It was curious," he says, "to hear them call each other Monsieur l'Abbé, Monsieur le Vicomte, adhering to times already so far away when they were both so different. The Duc de Laval, who came in just as M. de Lamennais had left, could not get over his surprise when he was told about it. He asked question after question about the redoubtable Abbé, and could not get any other reply from Ballanche except that he was a 'charming man.' Ballanche's weakness for Lamennais sprang from more than one cause. . . . The renewed intercourse between Chateaubriand and Lamennais continued and, Béranger aiding as a bond between them, they arrived at a sort of rather intimate friendship." Lamennais always felt keen gratitude to Mme. Récamier for this, which is evident in his letters to Ballanche.²

At the Abbaye-aux-Bois Chateaubriand gave up his rôle of pontiff and let himself be seen as he was naturally, with the doubts which at times besieged him.

"One day at Mme. Récamier's," writes Sainte-Beuve again,³

¹ *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 393.

² *Sainte-Beuve*, by the Vicomte d'Haussonville, pp. 118 and 120.

³ *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, pp. 393 and 394.

"singular things were being discussed before him, things connected with animal magnetism, catalepsy, somnambulism, and extraordinary things were quoted which someone present had witnessed. When the person who had told these stories had gone away, M. de Chateaubriand, who had been rather silent, said : 'For my part, I am very unfortunate. I have always wanted to see something and have never been able to see anything of that kind ; nothing has ever revealed itself to me ; I must be of too coarse a fibre. . . . I dined one evening with the mystic St. Martin, and when midnight struck I went away without having seen anything. . . . Perhaps, though, it is because all my faith is taken up elsewhere in the direction of a determined object. I believe in God as firmly as in my own existence ; I believe in Christianity—as a great truth always, as a divine religion as much as I can. I believe in it twenty-four hours ; then the Devil comes and plunges me back into a great doubt which I am entirely taken up with trying to solve. The fact is, that all my powers of faith being strained in that direction, I have not any to waste on these objects of secondary credulity.'

This is charming, and makes up a little for the Chateaubriand in parade dress. In these Abbaye discussions, though, the conversation had nothing forced or solemn about it. Intelligence had a free course there. It was to Mme. Récamier that Béranger one day made the witty speech recorded by Mme. de Bawr in her *Souvenirs*.¹ They were speaking of a mutual friend who was supposed to be well up concerning the Revolution. "One thing about him surprises me very much," said Mme. Récamier, "and that is you will never convince him that M. de Lafayette did not want the death of the Ministers of Charles X, and so sent the worst legion of the National Guard to the Luxembourg to defend them. For my part," she continued, "I am thoroughly convinced that M. de Lafayette never wanted a head." "Never," said Béranger, "but that does not say that he had not great need of one," he added, laughing.²

¹ Second edition, p. 199.

² See also the account of a very curious political conversation in February 1833, in the *Lettres de Mme. Swetchine*, published by Falloux, I, pp. 305 and 306.

No doubt these *salon* habits and customs have their inconveniences, for judgment becomes blunted and characters run the risk of getting insipid. "She enchain'd us all," said Sainte-Beuve.¹ It was just that which made Mérimée indignant. careless as he was on other points. And Taine, with his logic, is irritated by this delay in the development of the great critic. "What a distance," he wrote one day,² "between the Sainte-Beuve of *Volupté*, of the first *Portraits*, and the Sainte-Beuve, psychologist, physiologist, the great moral botanist of the close. The first was the train-bearer of the poets and great writers, the appointed commentator, a modest acolyte at Mme. Récamier's; the second is one of the two founders of psychological criticism and of the natural history of man." These are very great words. Everyone learnt, at least, at Mme. Récamier's to get rid of formulas, to become supple, to get into shape.³ Sainte-Beuve learnt to soften his criticism there, and in spite of himself he made an effort to like what he was destined one day to attack. Chateaubriand, when writing his *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, increased his praise of Mme. de Staél.⁴ Mme. Récamier had been taught at least by experience. She was an optimist in spite of her misfortunes, and she now extended to both of them her kindliness and her affection.

We must see this affection at work. In March, 1832, Chateaubriand was appointed by the Duchesse de Berry member of her *secret Government*.⁵ He replied to this mark of confidence by a long and very fine letter in which he begged permission to end his days in seclusion. "If your Royal Highness," he said, "appointed me publicly as your Ambassador to the people of the *New France*, I would inscribe in large letters on my door *Legation of the former France*. Anything then might happen that God pleased, but I cannot understand secret devotion. I can only be guilty of fidelity openly." In

¹ See *Causeurs du Lundi*, XIV, p. 314 and following.

² Letter to M. Alb. Collignon, quoted in V. Giraud, *Essai sur Taine*, 1901, pp. 266 and 267. See Taine's utterly different judgment about the Abbaye in his reception speech at the French Academy.

³ About the services which Mme. Récamier rendered to Sainte-Beuve see Pons, *Sainte-Beuve et ses inconnues*, pp. 136-137.

⁴ Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. de femmes*, p. 125.

⁵ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 102.

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the name of the "outlawed daughter of Saint-Louis and of Henri IV" he sent to the Prefect of the Seine the sum of 12,000 francs for the cholera victims.¹ M. de Bondy refused to accept this sum. In April the Duchesse de Berry landed in Provence. Chateaubriand sent her in vain two notes begging her not to persevere in her enterprise.² Berryer, who had been entrusted with these notes, was arrested at Angoulême, and on the 16th of June Chateaubriand himself was arrested, under the accusation of plotting against the safety of the State.³ The adventure is told in the *Mémoires*. The treatment of the prisoner was not harsh, and a small room was given to him in the apartments of the Prefect of Police. On the 30th of June the case was dismissed. Charles X made him accept a sum of 20,000 francs.⁴

In these somewhat tragic circumstances Mme. Récamier did not desert her great friend. She went to see him, and sent Ampère, Lenormant, Ballanche, and Villemain to him.⁵ Among the papers left by her the following document is still to be seen :

"No. 7.—Court of Justice, Dep. of the Seine.

"PARIS, 1831 (*sic*).

"Monsieur Ballanche may communicate with Monsieur de Châteaubriant.

"June 20th, 1832.

[Signature illegible.]"

Mme. Récamier consoled Mme. de Chateaubriand.⁶ She did more than this. Bertin and the *Journal des Débats* had gone over to the new Government. Mme. Récamier intervened with the "important friend," and on the 18th of June the *Journal des Débats* published a very dignified article asking for the liberty of its glorious collaborator. The same day Bertin wrote to Mme. Récamier begging her to appease Chateaubriand. "My only hope is in you," he wrote, "in you alone!" Thanks to these interventions, the affair had no

¹ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 113.

² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁵ M.O.T., V, p. 529. *Lettres de Chateaubriand*, II, M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, p. 405 and following.

other result than to persuade a man of truly difficult character to leave Paris promptly.¹

On the 8th of August, 1832, after writing a farewell letter to Béranger, Chateaubriand started for Switzerland. His wife was to join him at Lucerne. In the fourth part of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, Book II,² he has himself described this journey in search of a shelter where he could finish his great work. He represents himself dragging about with him "an enormous collection of papers, diplomatic correspondence, confidential notes, letters from Ministers and Kings."³ We can follow him to Vesoul, where he met with Augustin Thierry; to Basle, where before Holbein's *Dance of Death* he meditates on human vanities; through the valleys of Argovia and to Lucerne, where he is present at the benediction of the mountains by the Capuchin monks. It was there that the admirable apostrophe to the Alps, which expresses all the bitterness of an afflicted heart, was written. "Alps, lower your summits, I am no longer worthy of you," it says; "if young I should be a recluse, but being old, I am only alone. I could still paint Nature well, but for whom? Who would care for my pictures, what arms other than those of time would embrace my genius as a recompense? Who would repeat my songs? What muse should I inspire with them? Under the weight of my years, as under that of the snowy mountains which surround me, no ray of sunshine will come to warm me. How pitiful to drag my weary footsteps that no one cares to follow across the mountains! What a misfortune only to be free to wander again, now that the end of my life is here!"⁴

It was the most profound distress. The traveller was incapable of seeing in Nature anything but himself. He tried in vain to say to himself that glory and power are not

¹ On the incarceration of Chateaubriand, see specially the ode by Veyrat (quoted by Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, X, pp. 134-135). *Où et là, études historiques*, by Mme. Fanny Denoix des Vergnes, Paris, Collignon, 1865. Hippol. Lucas, *Portr. et souvenirs littéraires*, p. 8.

² Edit. Biré, V, from p. 546.

³ P. 546. In 1832 there appeared in Paris (2 vols. in-8, Vimont) a history by S. Marin of the life and works of M. de Chateaubriand, "considered as poet, traveller, statesman, with the analysis of his works," *Bibliothèque Nat.*, Ln. 27, 4073.

⁴ Pp. 554-555.

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worth as much as religion and liberty. He missed his love affairs and his former dreams and, as he owns himself,¹ he had never felt more passionate than at this time when life seemed to be so restricted for him. It was then that from the mountain sides of St. Gothard² he saw the sylphid of the Combourg Wood rise up before him, and he addressed to it his wonderful prayer, "Are you coming to me again, charming phantom of my youth?" He wanted to take the grey blouse and the fair beard of the student he meets³ in exchange for his disillusionments and his weariness. He continues along the St. Gothard path, in the midst of snow, among the wild walnut and larch trees, enjoying for a moment the sound of the waterfalls and the verdure of the valleys, but his memories oppress him unceasingly. "My memory compares, the whole time, my travels with my travels, mountains with mountains, streams with streams, forests with forests, and my life destroys my life."⁴ In his troubled mind he saw barbarian hordes passing along like immense shadows, Roman legions, the caravans of travellers such as crossed these same Alps in former times, before all, the vulgarity of civilization. Every detail was to him a symbol; his fertile imagination animated everything, peopled the solitary wilds, lent ideas to all the landscapes, but was never at rest.

Passing through Airolo and Bellinzona, Chateaubriand put up at Lugano one night under the mysterious light of the moon. He had caught a glimpse of Lake Maggiore which reminded him of the Verona Congress and his Ambassadorship at Rome. He visited Lugano when there was "a breeze blowing, scented with the amber of the pines."⁵ He then crossed the St. Gothard again, dragging about with him always "earthly cares."⁶ He saw Lucerne once more. Mme. de Chateaubriand had not yet arrived. He met Alexandre Dumas, who was also seeking to be forgotten by the Government.⁷ Going through Zurich and Winterthur, he reached Constance on the 27th of August.⁸

¹ P. 558.

² It is interesting to compare Michelet's meditation, *Le Prêtre*, in front of St. Gothard with this evocation.

³ P. 559.

⁴ P. 562.

⁵ P. 568.

⁶ P. 570.

⁷ See E. Biré's note, p. 576.

⁸ P. 577.

Mme. Récamier had been there three days.¹ She had decided on this journey on account of the cholera which was ravaging Paris, and which had driven her from the Abbaye-aux-Bois. "She has come," writes Chateaubriand, "to pay a visit to the Queen of Holland."² It is very probable that the attraction of seeing him again after so many storms had something to do with her decision.³

The interest of this journey for us is first in the visit Mme. Récamier paid to the former Queen, Hortense de Beauharnais, who, after wandering about in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, where we have already met her, had settled down under the name of the Duchesse de Sainte-Leu in the Château of Arenenberg, in Thurgau. She had lost her eldest son, Napoleon-Charles, and now lavished the greater part of her affection on her son, Charles-Louis, who was later on to be Napoleon III. The young prince of twenty-four years of age, whom his family treated as a sovereign, had taken part quite recently in the Italian revolutions. The death of the Duc de Reichstadt made him, precisely that year 1832, the direct representative of the Napoleonic dynasty. He did a sepia drawing for Mme. Récamier of Lake Constance. The Duchesse read to her visitors a few fragments of the *Mémoires* she was about to publish.⁴

Chateaubriand had recently exchanged a few letters with the hosts of Arenenberg. Mme. de Saint-Leu had endeavoured to prove to him that he was "in spite of himself the antagonist of his party," and that altogether she considered him "a Liberal, a Napoleonist, and even a Republican rather

¹ Ballanche has preserved for us this note, written by M. de Chateaubriand on Mme. Récamier's tablets after the reading of the last book of his *Mémoires*, which had just been written at Lucerne, and after a story about Jean-Jacques Rousseau: "What I wanted at the Lake of Lucerne I have found at Lake Constance—charm, intelligence, beauty. I do not want to die like Rousseau; I want to see the sunshine for a long time yet. If it is with you that I am to end my life, I want my days to pass away at your feet like those gentle waves, the murmur of which you love.—By Lake Constance, August 28th, 1832." *Biogr. inédit de Mme. Récamier*, p. 343.

² P. 578.

³ See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 410.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 410 and following. See in the *Impressions de voyage en Suisse*, by Dumas, the delightful chapter entitled *Les poules de M. de Chateaubriand*, chap. xl. of Vol. II, edition 1896, p. 228 and following. Compare *ibid.*, p. 137 of the third volume.

than a Royalist."¹ It was very skilful to show the discontented servitor of royalty the glory that a new *régime* could offer him; it was, however, asking him to fall into a snare from which his honour preserved him. Chateaubriand excused himself, resisted fresh seductions,² but was nevertheless touched; gave Prince Louis to understand this, and felt very much flattered at walking "between the two highest powers on earth, fallen powers, giving his arm on one side to the family of Saint-Louis and on the other side to that of Napoleon,"³ and when the opportunity presented itself not hesitating to accept an invitation to dinner at the Château of Arenenberg.⁴ He has given us an account which takes up three pages of this interview, in which he is most deferential to the Duchesse de Saint-Leu and her friends.

Mme. Récamier took up her abode at the Château of Wolfsberg, not far from Arenenberg.⁵ It was there that Ballanche, who was still unwell, sent her the Paris news. He would have liked Chateaubriand to stay in France to write his *Mémoires*, in the dignity of a quiet seclusion near Juliette.⁶ All the great literary and political events are reflected in Ballanche's letters. He always accompanied the mention of them by interesting reflections.⁷

After his unfortunate journey to Rome with Lacordaire and de Montalembert, and his return without being received by the Pope, Lamennais was affected by the famous encyclical letter of August 15th, 1832, which condemned the liberal and democratic doctrines of *L'Avenir*. It was at this moment that Lamennais gave in his submission and retired to La Chesnaie. On the 15th of September Ballanche wrote to Mme. Récamier: "You will have seen from the papers that M. de Lamennais and his friends, in order not to be in opposition with the Pope and in contradiction with themselves, are retiring from the polemics they had undertaken. They are giving up at the same time the paper *L'Avenir* and the

¹ See her extremely curious letter in *M.O.T.*, V, pp. 580-581.

² See pp. 582 and 583.

³ P. 584.

⁴ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 585 and following.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 584.

⁶ See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 415, 416, 417.

⁷ See in Pailhès, *Du nouveau sur Joubert*, pp. 405-406, a letter from Ballanche to the Comtesse de Fontanès, dated June 25th, 1832.

Society for religious liberty. This is, in my opinion, a great event, because of the fact that Catholicism seems to be separating itself more and more from us. The Gallicans will perhaps try to hoist a flag once more, but they would have so few people with them that it would really be a pity. You know that I was rather inclined to believe in the possibility of the reconstitution of a Catholic unity. M. de Lamennais has just run aground. Nothing remains, therefore, but your poor friend's *Palingénésie*. It is quite proved to me now that it is for the religious society to constitute itself, and when once constituted it will produce its authority and its symbol. The way in which I can be of use is in preparing the path. What is happening, too, for religious society is happening also for civil and also political society. Authority no longer has in itself the force of assimilation and of the representation of ideas.”¹

Ballanche's Liberalism, if it had made him rather favourable to the Socialists, had brought him much nearer to the writers of *L'Avenir*. The failure of a party of Liberal Catholics certainly gave him the right of claiming for himself the rôle that others were giving up.² He was rather vexed to see that men who knew him, such as Saint-Marc Girardin, forgot to speak of him in their articles, and to see that the *Journal des Débats* published, without mentioning him, several studies of Roman history in which theories were examined of which he believed himself to be the first author.

“ But that does not matter,” he added. “ My name is much better known than it seems, and Nodier was saying to me yesterday that before two years have passed by it will be one of the most popular names of France. I spoke to you yesterday about a meeting of working men that takes place every Saturday at the house of a foreman who lives near Nodier. I was present yesterday at this meeting. Nodier and I were the only two persons there who were not working men. There were a few women present, but only the wives of working men. I was astonished at the intelligence of all

¹ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. Address. Mme Récamier, Constance, Grand Duchy of Baden.

² J. J. Ampère in his *Ballanche*, p. 228 and following pages, comments on these facts, and gives five lines of the fragment we have just quoted.

these people. This little society commenced with the doctrines of Saint-Simon, and it has now left those to try the systems of Fourier. Now I am penetrating there. Would you believe that yesterday, in the midst of a discussion started by Nodier, in which I was mixed up, I was drawn on to the exposition of my historical system founded on the Christian dogma of decay and rehabilitation, and that I was perfectly well understood? What proves how thoroughly I was understood is that, having applied my system to Roman history, they said that if it were applied to the history of France we should find that we had arrived at the fifth century of Rome. And by the conversation which followed I felt that all their minds had entered into the most general sphere, as they at once endeavoured to apply the system to the whole of human destiny. I do not know what M. Villemain would have thought if he had been present at this meeting and had realized that I was much better understood there than I should have been in the midst of the French Academy. It is the truth nevertheless. I do not know whether you noticed some time ago, in the *Journal des Débats*, an article by M. Saint-Marc Girardin in which he compared the introduction of what he calls the proletarians into civil society to an invasion of barbarians. I may say that this article had greatly hurt the men amongst whom I found myself, and M. Saint Marc has no idea of it, I am sure. What is to be done with susceptibilities so keen and so promptly aroused? I must confess that the task of statesmen becomes very difficult, but anyhow they ought at least to know something of all the elements of the present problem."¹

Sometimes a shade of irony creeps into the worthy Ballanche's letters. When speaking of Mme. de Chateaubriand he says: "I fancy that her need of moving about is strongly tempered by all the uncertainties of knowing where to settle. I fancy that M. de Chateaubriand himself will get used to the idea that Paris is the place that suits him the

¹ Letter which has only partially been published. The date is September 1st, 1832, and the address, Mme. Récamier, Constance, Grand Duchy of Baden. J. J. Ampère quotes sixteen lines of it in his *Ballanche*, pp. 238 and 239. It is in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

best, and that it is there that he is better protected through his immense fame."¹ As for Ballanche, his one hope was to go back to his ordinary life. "My fame will increase, sheltered by those sweet habits. M. de Chateaubriand will continue his *Mémoires* in peace. Young Ampère will give us his *Scandinavie*, M. Lenormant his *Arcadie*, and everything will be brightened by your pleasant smile, by your inspirations of every day."²

M. and Mme. de Chateaubriand decided to leave Constance

¹ Unpublished letter of August 16th. The same address. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Same letter. We do not want to give more quotations in our text. We are, however, borrowing a few hitherto unpublished passages which seem to us worthy of interest from Ballanche's letters to Mme. Récamier during her stay at Constance. First letter, dated 27th of August: "I dined on Sunday with Nodier, and told him all your fellow-feelings. But one thing rather singular is that I am beginning to make my way with the working people. . . . All that is due to the religious sap which is in my writings, and all that shows me the thirst people have for religious guidance. If I can reach the working class it will be a great conquest, and the first step has been made. Now for another thing. At Nodier's I met the philosopher Jouffroy, who is a member of the Chamber. We did not talk philosophy, but politics. I asked what the Opposition would be like, and he replied that it would be very violent, but that this violence would not last, because it would soon feel that the country was not with it. The Opposition press is also beginning to discover the indifference of the country for theories that want to drive it to action. I therefore think that we are going to spend some time under the régime of ideas. When the ideas are ripe they will naturally produce the deeds which are their true expression. You know that this, according to my opinion, is the true advance of humanity." Another fragment of this letter is given in J. J. Ampère's *Ballanche*, pp. 237 and 238. Second letter, of August 30th: "For a long time I have intended compiling a little volume which would have for its title *Death as a symbol of immortality*. The book is really written, for it would consist of different episodes of my works: The Shunamite's daughter (from *Orphée*); the Death of Edipus (*Antigone*); the Sibyl of the Old World (*Orphée*); the Death of Eurydice (*Orphée*); the death of Erigone (*Orphée*); the death of Antigone (*Antigone*); the death of Virginie (*Formule Générale*); the death of Orpheus (*Orphée*). All these episodes are pictures of death, but of death which produces life. All these deaths therefore are sweet, pleasant, harmonious, and for several of them even the funeral ceremony is presented under the emblem of a nuptial pomp. Whilst I am thinking about this little volume, to which I am very partial, I am arranging in my mind another little volume, but this one has to be written. It is the *Tapisserie fée* [Tapestry Fairy.] Death will also be the symbol of immortality in this. I am thinking, too, of my volume of *Méditations*, but that will be the last act of my life, my will and testament. You see that I have still some wool for my distaff, and that it is always white wool, as white as the vision of your pure and sacred person." Another fragment from this letter is in J. J. Ampère's *Ballanche*, pp. 230 and 231. Third letter, of September 5th: "I am glad that M. de Chateaubriand is in a delightful humour. I very much fear that Mme. de Chateaubriand will bring him bad health and weariness."

for Geneva, and Mme. Récamier soon went to join them there.¹ She was to stay with them until the end of October, 1832. It was at this time that the visit to Coppet took place about which we read in the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*. Juliette felt at every step that she was with her celebrated friend once more. She wandered along the avenues where she had loved to stroll with Mme. de Staél. Then there was the pilgrimage to the tombs,² and Chateaubriand, seated on a bench facing the wood, waited there for Mme. Récamier, who alone had permission to go in search of the beloved one's spirit. Through her infinite kindness she had once more taken up her usual rôle with the great dreamer, and with unwearying patience she listened to his never-ending woes and shared the emotion caused by his souvenirs.³

At Geneva, as at Constance, Ballanche's faithful letters arrived regularly, giving her all the news of the day together with his most affectionate protestations of devotion. What a contrast it was! Whilst the man in whom René would not die was dragging himself along in the midst of grievous lamentations, and as though languishing from some mysterious fever, the worthy Ballanche, ill as he was, since he could not travel, beseeched his friend not to be anxious about him, and only to take care of herself. Ballanche's happiness was to write these letters, in which he comments as a philosopher on interesting events and discusses men and things, as had been the custom at the Abbaye.

"I have read," he writes on the 4th of October, "M. de Chateaubriand's letter which was inserted in the *Journal de Genève* and repeated in the French papers. He settles very clearly his situation between the different parties and in relation to France and to other countries. I am delighted with this public declaration, because it makes me hope that his choice for this winter will be in favour of France."

"We are here in the throes of forming a new Ministry. I used to think I had a fairly keen sentiment of the real opinion

¹ See *M.O.T.*, V, p. 588 and following. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 418. About Chateaubriand's behaviour at this time, and his intentions to commit suicide, see Sainte-Beuve's mockery, *Causeries du Lundi*, XI, p. 447.

² Sainte-Beuve is mistaken in placing this pilgrimage in 1831. *Portr. de femmes*, p. 125. ³ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 592.

of the country, but I must confess that at present I feel much less sure of it. I fancy that the press, as it now is, rather dazzles my eyes and prevents my seeing distinctly. I nevertheless think that our winter will pass by satisfactorily, that something fairly settled will be constituted, a truce caused by weariness, which will in the end be a veritable truce, during which time ideas will ripen for the accomplishment of fresh deeds.

“This is why I wish we were all in Paris. M. de Chateaubriand can very well take part in the ideas without mixing up with things, and you know how marvellously he understands associating himself with the ideas of the times. And there will be glory still for him in this exceptional situation. Believe me, it is in this sphere of ideas that all minds ought at present to agree solemnly to meet.”¹

Ballanche's hopes were not to be justified. When he announced the approaching appeasement he did not foresee the Ministerial crises which the Cabinet of October 11th was to experience more than any other, in spite of the authority of men like Thiers, Guizot, and de Broglie.² But Ballanche's ideas about politics were quite out of the common and, in virtue of a singular disposition of mind, he could detach himself from the present in order to work better for the future.

He told Mme. Récamier this in his curious letter of October 13th :

“Those who do not take an active part in present affairs, who are not obliged to take part, and who do not wish to do so, have the first *rôle* to play just now. Strangers to the epoch, it is they who govern it definitively. M. Cousin and M. Villemain are now peers of France. I do not know why people insist on giving the name of peerage to an institution which really is not a peerage. But this is for special discussion, as I do not want to leave speculation. Cousin and Villemain have chosen to take part in action, consequently they have abdicated their share in theory and speculation.

¹ Unpublished letter of October 4th, 1832. Address, Mme. Récamier, Geneva. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Charles Lenormant was appointed by Guizot assistant custodian of the medal collection.

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They have placed themselves at the service of things which are transitory by their very nature, instead of placing themselves at the service of ideas which are immutable. In my opinion their choice is not a good one.

“M. de Lamennais has found himself in a situation analogous to that of M. de Chateaubriand. He could not be in contradiction to the Pope’s encyclical letter. He could not put himself in the condition imposed by the Sovereign-Pontiff either. He has therefore given up his share in action. *L’Avenir* will no longer be published. But M. de Lamennais and his noble school will still be here. They are rising to a general philosophy, completely independent of circumstances.

“It is a singular thing, but very striking. I see several schools being formed around me, and I see that all of them, without exception, commence by declaring themselves disinterested in the questions of every day. There are only the newspapers left which keep up this regular day by day polemic. I have even noticed one paper, the *Courrier de l’Europe*, the former paper of M. Berryer, which is commencing an evolution in the sense of disinterestedness in the present. I assure you that all elevated minds are tending in this direction.”¹

Jean-Jacques Ampère was not forgotten by his friend, and the letters that she wrote him complete our knowledge about this episode of the Swiss voyage. In a letter dated August 28th she said to him: “I was awaiting the arrival of M. de Chateaubriand before speaking to you of our plans. He came two days ago. Lugano is *delightful, charming*, a perfect fairyland, but uninhabitable. He is undecided between Constance, Lucerne, and Geneva. He is leaving again the day after to-morrow for Lucerne, to await Mme. de Chat. I am staying here, and in this state of uncertainty I have decided to spend the month of September here. Decide what you would like to do. If you come to Constance we will wait there for M. de Chat., or we will go and pay him

¹ Unpublished fragment of the letter of October 13th, 1832. Address, Mme. Récamier, Geneva. M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. The fragment quoted in *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 420, belongs to the same letter.

a visit at Lucerne. We had a charming time on the lake yesterday. He was reading me the last book of his *Mémoires* which he had written whilst travelling, and which is admirable, as regards talent and freshness of imagination. We talked a great deal about you; you know how much he appreciates your intelligence, how well we should get on, all three of us! How much I should like us all to meet again in this way! On returning from our boating expedition we met Queen Hortense and the Pretender, who were awaiting us on shore. I saw your friend before leaving, but I was not very nice to him.¹ M. de Chat. was annoyed at his visit. I will see him again, and try to make up for this in memory of you. I am waiting for *Sigurd*, which I have announced. We will have it read at the Duchesse de Saint-Leu's. I should have preferred your reading it, but think it over well before deciding, and see what will suit you best, in order not to lose too much of your precious time. If M. de Chat. were here I should insist more, because you could have worked with him. Anyhow, you will find me here until the end of September, and you know whether I should like to see you."²

On the 3rd of September Mme. Récamier said to J. J. Ampère: "I am again writing you a few lines of farewell. I am rather better, but as sad as I was yesterday. I am leaving in eight or ten days. I again recommend you to be very prudent. I heard accounts about the cholera yesterday which made me shudder. This network of sanitary cordons, this possibility of being detained in spite of one's self, all these impediments make one anxious, and in such moments one ought not to part from one's friends, and yet I am dragged along just as you are by destiny. Farewell, farewell!"³ J. J. Ampère did not go to Switzerland. Mme. Récamier regretted this, but approved of his decision.

We can quite believe Mme. Lenormant when she says⁴ that Chateaubriand's fate "depressed Mme. Récamier sadly."

¹ Probably Mohl.

² Unpublished letter, according to the original belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie. See elsewhere, *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 46 and following.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 420.

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A fresh incident was about to take place in the agitated life of the author of the *Mémoires*. He heard of the arrest of the Duchesse de Berry,¹ went back to Paris, and was refused by the Government permission to go to Blaye and join the Princess. He thereupon sent a somewhat nonsensical circular letter to the editors of the newspapers. However favourably disposed one may be to Chateaubriand, it is difficult not to see in all he did at this epoch a great deal of pride and of vanity under an appearance of modesty, an immoderate desire to occupy opinion. He employed the means that he had just disapproved himself, and sent the Duchesse de Berry a letter asking for the formation of a kind of council of which he would be the chief.² He drew up his *Mémoire sur la captivité de Mme. la Duchesse de Berry*, which he brought out on the 29th of December. In it he played the democrat. "Chateaubriand," wrote A. de Vigny in the *Journal d'un poète*,³ "has just written a pamphlet pleading for the Duchesse de Berry, in which he is a trifle republican. The least of the republican writers does not fancy himself in the slightest obliged to be a trifle monarchical.... A certain sign that the movement of minds is democratic, since the most ardent *monarchist* plays the democrat." The pamphlet made a great impression. On the 26th of January the *Gazette des Tribunaux* announced that "at the suit of the Attorney-General, proceedings would be taken against the Vicomte de Chateaubriand."⁴ He appeared in court with several newspaper managers, and was acquitted, although he had not been defended. The Duchesse sent him a letter⁵ begging him to go to Prague and announce to Charles X. that in Italy she had married Comte Hector Lucchesi-Palli.⁶ Chateaubriand had his old open carriage "repaired," and on the 14th of May he set out "in search of Henri V, child, orphan, and outlaw." He took with him his secretary, Hyacinthe Pilorge. He spent several days

¹ *M.O.T.*, V, p. 593 and following. Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 151 and following.

² Biré, work quoted, p. 157.

³ P. 78.

⁴ Biré, work quoted, p. 166. See Sainte-Beuve's *Chron. littéraire*, reproduced in his *Premiers Lundis*, II, p. 184.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁶ *M.O.T.*, VI, p. 11 and following.

with Charles X,¹ joined the Duchesse d'Angoulême at Carlsbad, but failed in his mission, as Charles X refused to agree to the exigencies of the Duchesse. On the 5th of June Chateaubriand was back in the Rue d'Enfer : his journey had not lasted a month. His letters to Mme. Récamier during this kind of embassy have been published. It seems to us necessary, though, to give the text again according to the originals.

“ May 14th, 1833.

“ Write always *poste restante*. And then if you make inquiries you will find some bankers who will get your letters through with their correspondence. Tell Mme. de Boigne that I started *with the most pacific ideas*, as I wanted to prevent petty intrigues and arrive if possible at eventual arrangements for the future, provided that the *juste milieu* does not attack me and become a personal enemy when the news of my journey is known and the papers state plainly, and without commentary, that I have gone to Prague on a mission for Mme. la Duchesse de Berry. See to that carefully.

“ How unhappy I am at leaving you ! But I shall soon be back, and I shall write to you from the Rhine waterfall. Yours for life. Yours, yours !²

(Second volume, pp. 15 and 16.—*Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 421-422.)

“ BASLE, May 17th, 1833.

“ Here I am safely at Basle. You were here last year. You have seen this beautiful river, which will take news of me to you in France. I do not know whether I shall be able to stop at the waterfall because of you, and all things are because of you.³ Travelling always gives me back force, sentiment, and ideas. I am just inclined for the writing of the new prologue of *a book*. I read Pellico entirely whilst on the way. I am delighted with it. I should like to give an account of this work, the sanctity of which will hinder its success with our revolutionaries, who are free after the fashion

¹ *M.O.T.*, p. 65 and following.

² Address : Mme. Récamier.

³ This phrase is omitted by Mme. Lenormant.

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of Fouché. Are you not charmed with the *Zanze sotto i piombi*, and the little deaf and dumb person, and the old jailer Schiller, and the religious conversations through the window and our poor Maroncelli, and with the poor young wife of the *soprintendente*, who dies in such a sweet way, and the return to beautiful Italy ! Pellico had visions. I believe the devil had shown him a few pages of my *Mémoires*. Besides, his genius is not very Italian, and he speaks a language different from that of the old classics of Italy. I have some difficulty in forgiving him his gallicisms, his *chi che si fosse*, his disagreeable *parecchi*, etc. But Heavens ! what am I talking about, and what has all this to do with the object of my journey ? It is this accursed Rhine, which saw Cæsar, and which is laughing to see me running after empires. Do not forget me, and do not fail to remember me to our friends, and above all to M. Ampère.

“ I shall write from I know not where, for I do not know where I am going. Good-bye for the present.”

(Second volume, p. 17 and following.—*Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 422-423.—Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, pp. 176-177.)

“ SCHAFFOUSE, Saturday, 18th.

“ I have just seen the Rhine waterfall because of you. I was only able to look at it for a moment, think of you, and leave. I have not been to bed a single night. I shall arrive at my destination on Monday the 20th. I did not expect to arrive before the 24th. It will be four days gained on my return. M. de Sainte-Aulaire is passing through here to-day. We are not going to the same King. Good-bye. Do not fail to remember me to the friends of the little room.”¹

(Second volume, p. 21.—*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 424.)

“ WALDMÜNCHEN, May 22nd, 1833.

“ I have had to stop here at fifty leagues from my journey’s end for want of horses. I have lost twenty-four hours. They

¹ The address is in the handwriting of the secretary. Post-mark, May 22nd, 1833.

were very useful to me for getting a little rest. I was overwhelmed with weariness and sleepless nights. I can only write you a few lines on my way. What is very sure is that I will never leave my friends again, and that I have had enough and too much of travelling. I am thinking of nothing but seeing you once more. Good-bye until very soon, I hope. But when shall I have any news of you? How long the time is! Remember me to the little society of the Abbaye.”¹

(Second volume, pp. 22 and 23.—*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 424.)

“May 27th.

“I shall start for *Carlsbad* on Wednesday the 29th. They want me at Vienna. But I have such a longing to see you again and France that I do not know whether I shall go there, as it will delay me ten to twelve days. In any case I hope not to exceed my month. I must not leave you again.”²

(Second volume, p. 24.—*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 425.)

On his return journey Chateaubriand passed through Châlons, and he consigns to his *Mémoires* the recollections of it he had given to Mme. Récamier. He found the Abbaye society meeting at Passy for the summer. Juliette at that epoch frequently saw Mme. Desbordes-Valmore.³ She had known her for several years, and as early as May 30th, 1833, Marceline wrote as follows to her husband : “I hurried to the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and Mme. Récamier was as affable, affectionate, good, and gracious as possible. She kissed me about ten times, but heartily. She is simple, like kindness itself, for

¹ Address in another handwriting ; post-mark, May 30th, 1833.

² Address in another handwriting ; post-mark, June 6th, 1833.

³ In M. Arthur Pougin’s book, *La Jeunesse de Mme. Desbordes-Valmore*, a letter will be found from Marceline to Mme. Récamier, dated December 23rd, 1825 : “I am so touched, so affected, that I ought” P. 145 and following. Another letter, dated March 1st, 1826 : “You overwhelm me with your kindness” (p. 154) ; another letter, dated May 13th, 1828 : “The state of depression in which I am” (p. 169 and following) ; another of December 29th, 1828 : “As one offers one’s vows to some divinity” (pp. 170-171), with Mme. Récamier’s reply, p. 171, note 1 ; another of April 28th, 1831 : “Your kind remembrance” (pp. 174-175) ; another of December 9th, 1846 : “The first impulses of a heart in distress” (p. 302) ; another of September 11th, 1847 : “One must be weak and ill” (p. 306).

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that is saying everything. She is both twenty years of age and sixty, and the two ages suit her. She is very lovable. She took me aside to offer me many things, and it seems to me as though I received them three times over, so full was my heart. I promised her that I would take advantage of her kindness if driven to extremity. ‘It is there for you,’ she said. I have never seen anything more charming.”¹

Chateaubriand went back to his old habits. “I found once more,” he writes, “my old priests, the lonely corner of my garden, my *Mémoires*, reminders of my past life, and above all the select little society of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. The kindliness of a serious friendship makes ideas abound.”² It is at this moment that the curious letter, of which we are giving the full text, must be placed. Mme. Lenormant, who has published a portion of it, dates it by mistake in October.

(Second volume, p. 56 and following.—*Souv. et Corr.* II, pp. 436 and 437.)

“PARIS, Sunday 6th, 1833.

“If I could go one step beyond my fifteen hundred leagues, I should do it for you and should go to Passy, but I am at the end of my strength. This journey has settled my uncertainties. I can do nothing for these people.³ Prague proscribes Blaye and invokes Austrian authority, and I, poor servitor as I am, I am obliged to use my small authority for getting odious orders repealed. Everything is untrue; the Jesuits have not started; M. de Damas is still there. The poor young Legitimists who went there to compliment Henry were received like dogs, and avoided like the Heroes of July, for everyone is avoided, etc. The best one of the race is that poor woman. She trusts to me, and gives me her son who was never given to her. This son is no longer the same child. He is getting spoiled, and the *Bourbon* is growing afresh in the midst of adversities which have not improved the last scion. In short, I have thousands of strange things to tell you. To-morrow I shall go to see you.

¹ *Corr. intime de Mme. Desbordes-Valmore*, published by B. Rivière, I, p. 44.

² *M.O.T.*, VI, p. 213.

³ After this phrase Mme. Lenormant has cut out a great deal.

"Mme. de Chat. tells me that the papers spoke of my *carriages* and my *suite* when going through Switzerland, and they therefore came to a conclusion as to my *wealth*. You know what that is. My treasure is you, and my suite the memory of you. What a wretched country, though, where an upright man has no refuge, not even in his poverty. These gentlemen imagine that I am selling myself as they do. Good-bye until to-morrow. You are coming back on Tuesday, so we shall be together again."

It is well known that a fresh appeal from the Duchesse de Berry tore Chateaubriand once more from his tranquillity, She was to go herself to Prague, and wanted to meet him in Italy, in order to have his advice.¹ He accordingly left Paris for Venice on the 3rd of September. He was at Prague again in September, and was not back in his *infirmary* until the 6th of October. The *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* give a long account of this last embassy.² The *Souvenirs et Correspondance* give a fresh series of letters to Mme. Récamier, but this time again it is necessary to supply the exact text, which differs slightly from the text published by Mme. Lenormant.

(Second volume, p. 25 and following.—*Souv. et Corr.* II, p. 426.)

“ *Monday evening,*
“ *September 2nd, 1833.*

“ As I cannot see you to-morrow morning, I am writing this evening to say farewell. I am much less cheerful than for the last journey, although I am going when the weather is much better. I am leaving you unwell and alone, and I have no courage when it comes to that. Mme. de Ch. also is not well. In short, I am very much disturbed in my mind. I try to reassure myself by thinking that in less than a month I shall be back with you. I shall write to you and I shall bring you back notes, but it is a great misfortune to be living like this, all the time in the future, when so little of the present remains. What distresses me still more is that I shall be a very long time without receiving news from you. Risk a few words

¹ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 189.

² Vol. VI, from p. 221 to p. 364.

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anyhow, poste restante, Venice and Milan. If I am not there I will have them sent for.

“Love me a little and think of me. You know that that is the whole of my life and my safeguard.”

(Second volume, pp. 28 and 29.—*Souv. et Corr.* II, p. 427.)

“SAINT-MARC, September 4th, 1833.

“This hamlet where I have stopped for dinner is solitary, and has a fine view of the setting sun over a somewhat dreary country. It was to-day, the 4th of September and not the 4th of October, that I was born very many years ago. I dedicate to you the first beat of my heart, as there is no doubt that it was for you, although you were not yet born. I should like to write you a long letter, but the paving of this road has shaken my head so much that I am not well. Be tranquil; you will soon see me, and all will then be over.

“I shall put this letter in the post as I pass through Dijon to-night. The day after to-morrow, Friday, I shall be at Lausanne, and on Sunday at Milan.¹ I should like to have news of your leg. Write to M. Ampère about me.”²

(Second volume, p. 30 and following.—*Souv. et Corr.* pp. 427 and 428.)

“Saturday evening,
“September 7th, DOMO D’ OSSOLA.

“I must send you my greetings on setting foot in beautiful Italy. The day after to-morrow, in the morning, I shall be at Venice. I have had frightful weather, and it is still pouring. I think of nothing but seeing you again. As for details, do not hope for any. I am worn out with sleepiness and fatigue. By the rapidity of my journey you will see that I have not been to bed. I took a few notes, though, and in the Jura and again on the Simplon I had a gust of wind that I would give away for a hundred crowns.³

“I will write to you from Venice, from that Venice where I

¹ Mme. Lenormant, p. 427, finishes the letter here.

² Address is in another handwriting. Post-mark, Dijon, September 7th, 1833.

³ This is the exact text of the letter.

embarked a century ago for Jerusalem. Think of me, and get well in order to go with me to the Bois de Boulogne.”¹

(Second volume, p. 33 and following.—*Souv. et Corr.* II, pp. 428 and 429.)

“VENICE, September 10th, 1833.

“I do wish that you were here. The sun, which I had not seen since leaving Paris, has just made its appearance. I am staying at the entrance of the Grand Canal, with the sea bounding the horizon and under my window. My weariness is extreme, and yet I cannot help being sensible to the beautiful and melancholy sight of a city so charming and so desolate, and a sea almost without ships. And then the twenty-six years that have passed by since the day when I left Venice to embark at Trieste for Greece and for Jerusalem! If I had not met you during this quarter of a century, what hard things I should say to Heaven! I found nothing to guide me here. People are very good, but very thoughtless. I shall be obliged to wait for replies from Florence, so I shall have a week to wander about in Venice. I shall take advantage of it, and on Saint-François' day I will let you see that I have done so. This climate is so mild, so different from that of the Gauls. I have not yet been outside my inn. Everyone has been praying for the rain to cease. It ceased on my arrival here, and that is a good omen. Good-bye for the present.”²

(Second volume, p. 36 and following.—*Souv. et Corr.* pp. 429 and 430.)

“VENICE, September 2nd, 1833.

“Yesterday I had a very good day, if there are good days without you. I visited the Ducal Palace, and saw the palaces of the Grand Canal again. What poor wretches we are in the way of art compared with all this! I have all sorts of plans in my mind. I am taking notes, and it is on account of these notes that I am not giving you any details, as I do not want to repeat myself.

“The Valeri is a very good guide, but when one is on the spot one sees that it has not shown you anything. My

¹ The address is in another handwriting. Paris post-mark, September 16th, 1833.

² No address.

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memory has been very faithful, and after twenty-six years I am not mistaken in a step of the way or an opinion about a monument. I can understand that Lord Byron should have wanted to spend long years here. As for me, I would willingly end my life here if you would come. Mme. de Ch. likes Venice.¹

“I am awaiting news all the time. I have had some indirectly which makes me hope to arrive in time. In a few days my fate will be clear, and I shall return to you.

“To-day I am going to continue my expeditions: I am anxious to see the *Assumption* by Titian. One sees his master-pieces everywhere here; his light is so true that in looking at one of his pictures and then at the sky one does not notice passing from the picture to the reality. I have seen the librarians Bettio² and Gamba. I do not know whether Comte Cicognara is here.³ As the *Gazette de Venise* has announced my arrival, I expect to make some new acquaintances. Have you been to your woods again, and are you on your two feet? I am being eaten here by the same creatures that only stung you. Hyacinthe is nearly blind. Good-bye for the present. I place at your feet the most beautiful dawn in the world, which is lighting up the paper on which I am now writing. Do not forget all our friends.”

(Second volume, p. 40 and following.—*Souv. et Corr.* II, pp. 431–432.)

“VENICE, September 15th, 1833.

“Yesterday I received your letter of the 5th. I thank you a million times for it. It would have given me still more pleasure if it had not brought me the news that you are suffering. I cannot get accustomed to this continuation of pain for so slight an accident. I hope, though, that when you receive this letter you will be well again, and that you will have perhaps gone back to your woods.

“I have written to you often, and even rather *long* letters. I told you that the notes I am taking hinder my entering into

¹ Lenormant, Mme. de Chateaubriand.

² Lenormant, Betti.

³ Léopold Cicognara (1767–1834), President of the Fine Arts Academy of Venice and author of the *Storia della scultura*, Venice, 1813–1818. Mme. Récamier had kept a letter from him, dated August 2nd, 1825.

details. I go everywhere, *into society* too ; what do you think of that ? I spend nights in circles of beautiful ladies ;¹ what do you think of that ? I want to see everything, to know everything. They treat me wonderfully well. They tell me that I am *quite young*, and they are aghast at my untruths about my grey hair. Only fancy how proud I am, and how I believe in these compliments. One's pride is so foolish ! My secret is that I did not want to keep up my unsociability here after hearing of Lord Byron's. I did not want to be taken for the copy of the man of whom I am the original. I made myself *Ambassador* again.

"I have taken Venice in a different way from my forerunners. I have looked for things that travellers, who all copy each other, do not look for. No one, for instance, speaks of the cemetery of Venice ; no one has noticed the tombs of the Jews at Lido ; no one has entered into the habits and customs of the gondoliers, etc. You will see all that.

" "I am always without news, but expect to have some on the 18th or 19th. Whatever happens, I have done my duty. On Saint-Francois' day I shall be with you.

"Kind remembrances always to M. Ampère and the others.² Yours always and for ever."³

After having succeeded Fauriel and Villemain at the Sorbonne, J. J. Ampère replaced Andrieux at the College of France. Charles Lenormant was working at his *Trésor de numismatique* ; he had collected, under the title of *Artistes contemporains*, his pages on the Salons.⁴ It was the time, too, when Loève Veimars was publishing in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, among his *Lettres sur les hommes d'état de la France*, a study devoted to Benjamin Constant and full of allusions to Mme. Récamier.

¹ Lenormant, "ladies' circles."

² The text is modified in *Souv. et Corr.*

³ In the letter of September 18th, line 1, read : *I have been on an expedition here* ; line 10 read : *I wish they would exile me*. In the letter of the 20th, line 4, read : *I should have remained alone*. In the letter of the 22nd, line 2, read : *His affairs*. In the letter of the 29th, line 5, read : *impatient to meet you again* ; line 10 read : *Abbaye-aux-Bois* ; line 15 read : *not yet quite well*.

⁴ See the notice by Wallon, p. 22-23.

The great event of the year 1834 at the Abbaye was the organization of those celebrated *soirées*, at which the *Mémoires de Chateaubriand* were read to a select audience. In one of his two volumes on *Chateaubriand et son groupe*¹ Sainte-Beuve points out the importance of these reunions. "The *Mémoires*," he says, "have been read twice at times very different, very opposite. Before publication, they were only read to a little circle of the initiated, in a delicious sanctuary with all kinds of graceful arrangements and the semi-veil of mystery. The second time, cut up into pages in the midst of civil tempests, they were flung out in shreds on the crossways, and could be read, like Rétif, at every milestone."

Recollections connected with these *soirées* have been consigned to a very interesting book which is now rather rare : *Lectures des Mémoires de M. de Chateaubriand, ou recueil d'articles publiés sur ces Mémoires avec des fragmens originaux* (Paris, Lefèvre).² In the *Introduction* which M. Ed. Biré gives to his edition of the *Mémoires* he sums up the principal facts. In 1834 Chateaubriand's great work was very "far advanced. The whole of the part from the birth of the author in 1768 to his return from emigration in 1800 was finished, as well as the account of his Ambassadorship at Rome (1828–1829); of the Revolution of 1830, of his journey to Prague, and of his visits to King Charles X and to Mme. la Dauphine, to Mademoiselle, and to the Duc de Bordeaux. The conclusion was written."³ The readings took place at the Abbaye in February, 1834. "The assembly, composed of a dozen persons only, included representatives of old France and of the new France—Prince de Montmorency, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, Doudeauville, the Duc de Noailles, Ballanche, Sainte-Beuve, Edgar Quinet, the Abbé Gerbet, M. Dubois, Léonce de Lavergne, J. J. Ampère, Ch. Lenormant, Mme.

¹ Vol. I, p. 99, note.

² This work can be seen at the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Invent. Z, 45085.

³ Introd., p. v. Compare L. de Loménie, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, July 15th and September 1st, 1848. Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. cont.* I., p. 23 : "The thirty years of the Empire and of the Restoration are only traced in places."

Amable Tastu, and Mme. A. Dupin.”¹ The guests assembled at about two in the afternoon; Chateaubriand brought his manuscript wrapped up in a silk handkerchief. Ampère or Lenormant read. The reading lasted several days. Jules Janin, who was not present at these meetings, spoke of them, nevertheless, and wrote a long article for the *Revue de Paris* in March.² Alfred Nettement gave his impressions in *L'Echo de la Jeune France*.³ Désiré Nisard studied the new work carefully. Quinet also gave his account of it in the *Revue de Paris*.⁴ Ballanche wrote about it in the *Revue européenne*.⁵ Léonce de Lavergne gave vent to his admiration in the *Revue du Midi*. “The newspapers took it up, begged for fragments, which they reproduced, and all of them, without distinction of opinion, from the *Débats* to the *National* of 1834,⁶ from the *Revue européenne* to the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, from the *Courrier français* to the *Gazette de France*, from the *Tribune* to the *Quotidienne*, were united, for the first time perhaps, in the sentiment of a common admiration.”⁷

Sainte-Beuve played a very important rôle in these circumstances. He had been two or three years without seeing Chateaubriand again after the article in the *Globe*, when Ampère brought him to the Abbaye.⁸ He soon found himself quite at his ease there. Some very obliging things were done for him. When he wished to devote himself to teaching and to take Ampère’s place at the Normal School, Mme. Lenormant undertook to approach Guizot about it.⁹ Sainte-Beuve’s impatience was the reason why the affair was not concluded. Anyhow, he was admitted among the first to the readings of the *Mémoires*, “under the shadow of one of those great reputations of beauty

¹ Introd., p. vii. About Mme. A. Tastu’s intercourse with the Abbaye see *Souv. et Corr.* II, pp. 492–493. Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, Volume with Index, p. 18.

² Vol. III. See Chateaubriand’s letter, Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 208.

³ May and June Nos., 1834. Compare Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, pp. 213–214.

⁴ Vol. IV.

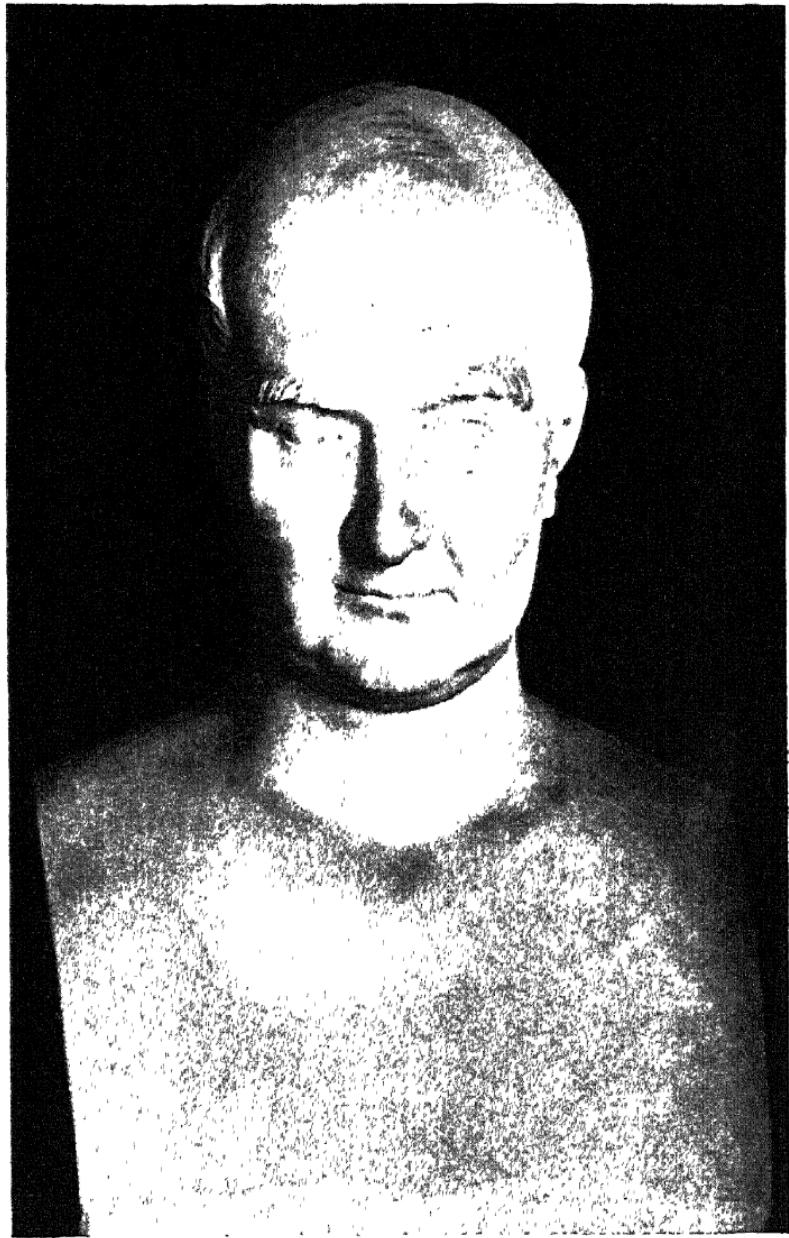
⁵ Vol. VIII, April 1834, No. 32.

⁶ See Chateaubriand’s letter to Carrel (Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 213 and following).

⁷ Biré, Introd., p. viii.

⁸ *Portr. cont.*, I, pp. 77 and 78, note.

⁹ See *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 291 and following.



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to which no one is insensible, an indefinable power that time itself consecrates and of which it makes a Muse."¹ He heard the *Mémoires* read "of the most illustrious living man, who was himself present in that small *salon*, which was sparsely enough but at the same time worthily enough filled to make one feel proud to be of the circle of the chosen."²

Sainte-Beuve wrote about Chateaubriand's manuscript those notes which have recently been published.³ It has rightly been supposed that the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* were communicated to him, since the work of the conscientious critic represents a note-book of twenty-four pages. On reading this document we have an idea of the impression of Sainte-Beuve when looking through this great work after having heard it read. He asked himself questions: "Is M. de Chateaubriand naturally sad, or is this a *rôle*?"⁴ He tried to state precisely the admirable writer's very basis, and in this meditation on the text of the *Mémoires* he found the formula which is the true one: "First, the artist, glory; second pleasure, love, women, vanity; third, worldly power and politics. . . . Common sense mingled with pomp, as with Louis XIV."⁵ What the notes show us, too, is that Sainte-Beuve, inquisitive, not from indiscretion but through his probity as a critic, wanted to ask Chateaubriand, under the poetic veil, questions about what the author of the *Mémoires* has concealed with wise care. "Send some verses to Chateaubriand on the delicate point of the *Mémoires*, love. How attentive when listening to catch the least mysterious words of what his heart does not betray."⁶

The famous article on Chateaubriand, published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of April 15th, was a result of this study. Not only the literary work of Chateaubriand was glorified in it (all the modern school, says Sainte-Beuve, emanates more or less from him),⁷ but his political *rôle* was justified, represented as an incessant attempt to conciliate "modern liberty and royal legitimacy," and his religious

¹ *Portr. cont.*, I, p. 9.

² *Ibid.* See a few very interesting pages in G. Michaut, *Sainte-Beuve avant les Lundis*, p. 295 and following.

³ See *Revue hist. littéraire* of July 15th, 1900.

⁴ P. 405, article quoted.

⁵ P. 406.

⁶ P. 407.

⁷ P. 14.

action was defended against the criticisms of men like Morellet and Ginguené. When, later on, in 1850, Sainte-Beuve corrected himself and gave a fresh criticism of the *Mémoires*, he made no difficulty about confessing that his first impressions had been "up to a certain point commanded and modified" by Mme. Récamier's influence.¹

Chateaubriand showed his gratitude. In July the two volumes of *Volupté* appeared, published by Renduel.² Chateaubriand declared that he was "delighted."³ Sainte-Beuve became one of the familiars of the Abbaye. On the 5th of September, 1834, he wrote to Ampère as follows: "Your father has arrived. M. Ballanche went yesterday to dine with him. Mme. Récamier has not gone back to Clamart. M. Lenormant has fallen out with Coste, who took away from him the Théâtre Italien in an ugly way during his absence. He is going to write in the *Débats* and take up the *Revue française* again, which has been so many times thought of. M. de Chateaubriand, whom I saw to-day, is wonderfully young and not too gloomy."⁴ On the 15th of September Sainte-Beuve published a study of Ballanche in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. This article had the most unpleasant consequences for the critic. It shocked the advanced Liberals, and Sainte-Beuve, who belonged to the staff of the *National*, was considered a "renegade."⁵ "The more exaggerated of the Republicans headed by Thibaudeau" were furious with him and Sainte-Beuve left the *National*. He was judged as "suspected of a vehement Restoration ardour."⁶ He even received a letter, somewhat "provocative," signed by Raspail and by Bastide. He left Paris, trusting to his absence for calming this agitation.

Mme. Récamier took an interest in the annoyance Sainte-Beuve was experiencing, partly for having wished to please

¹ *Causeries du Lundi*, I, p. 432. Compare *Portr. cont.*, I, p. 80.

² See Michaut, *Bibliogr. des écrits de Sainte-Beuve (Revue hist. littéraire de la France)*, January-March, 1903, p. 139).

³ Letter of July 14th, *Portr. cont.*, I, p. 79.

⁴ *Corr. de Sainte-Beuve*, I, p. 23-24.

⁵ *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 46 and following, and I, p. 137, note. Michaut, article quoted, p. 139 and following. See also Scherer's account, *Études*, V, p. 128.

⁶ *Corr. de Sainte-Beuve*, I, p. 26, letter of October 8th, 1834.

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her. Ballanche was dismayed.¹ At the close of 1834 the critic—it is he himself who declares it—went to the Abbaye two or three times a week.² On the 18th of December he wrote to J. J. Ampère : “ All is going on wonderfully at the Abbaye. Mme. Lenormant has started her Friday evenings again. M. Ballanche is sending in his candidature for the Academy, but Scribe will be preferred to him, although he will, I hope, be well supported.³ At this epoch Sainte-Beuve had already taken up the study of Port Royal.⁴

Since the readings of the *Mémoires* Chateaubriand had tried another venture.⁵ In October, 1834, he had given his *Moïse* at the Versailles theatre. The piece had no success.⁶ By way of consolation he decided to go and spend a few days at Fontainebleau. Three letters have been published which he sent to Mme. Récamier from the “ delicious desert.”⁷ The following letter, written on the very day of his departure, must be added to these :

“ PARIS, Wednesday morning, November 5th.

“ These few lines will reach you by post. I am distressed at leaving you unwell, and I fear for Saturday. If you do not come to fetch me, I shall return to you on Monday. I shall think of you in the woods and rest my poor head. I see in the papers the resignation of the Ministers. I do not believe in this farce. Philippe would surprise them very much if he took them at their word, and they would be quite astonished to see how little France troubled about them. How happy I am to be out of all this and to love you!”⁸

He soon returned, determined to devote the remainder of his life and strength to letters and friendship.⁹

¹ *Corr. de Sainte-Beuve*, I. p. 27.

² *Ibid.*, p. 30.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ See a portrait of Chateaubriand in July 1834, in the *Lettres de Mme. Swetchine*, published by Falloux, I, pp. 327-328.

⁶ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 221 and following.

⁷ *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 313 and following.

⁸ Autograph letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection, Vol. II of the letters from Chateaubriand, p. 63.

⁹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 437.

CHAPTER XXIII

LITERARY REUNIONS AT THE ABBAYE (1835—1841)

L'Abbaye-aux-Bois at Dieppe (July 1835).—Fieschi's attempted crime (July 28th) commented on by Chateaubriand and by Ballanche.—*Jocelyn* at the Abbaye.—Chateaubriand sells his *Mémoires* (June 1836).—Death of André-Marie Ampère (June 10th).—The fragment on Maintenon (September).—Mme. Récamier's health.—Death of the Duc de Laval (June 16th, 1837).—Readings from Quinet's *Prométhée* and from Sainte-Beuve's *Discours préliminaire*.—Chateaubriand at Chantilly (November).—Mme. Récamier at Baron Pasquier's.—Chateaubriand in the South of France (summer 1838).—Sainte-Beuve reads his notice on Fontanes.—Mme. Récamier at Ems (summer 1840).—Chateaubriand's letters.—Ballanche at Saint-Vrain.—Chateaubriand at Néris (summer 1841); he finishes reading his *Mémoires* again (September 25th, 1841).—Louis de Loménie.

We have now arrived at the year 1835. Mme. Récamier is fifty-eight years of age, and her health is bad.¹ Her sight is getting weak, but she has grown older gracefully. There is nothing sad and morose about her. Under appearances at times frivolous she has that resignation and that docility which long-continued self-possession and dealing with misfortune give. Chateaubriand at this time was sixty-seven. His soul still thrilled at times within him. He was continuing to write his *Mémoires* under the influence and within sight of her whom he named Beatrice, and who had the place of honour in them.²

It is impossible to relate the story of Mme. Récamier's last years without thinking of Mme. du Deffand, when, blind as she also was, the friend of President Hénault retired in

¹ See Pailhès, *Du nouveau sur Joubert*, p. 411.

² Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, II, p. 145.

1753 to the Convent of Saint-Joseph in the Rue Saint-Dominique,¹ to fall in love soon after with the fascinating Horace Walpole. Mme. du Deffand's *Correspondance* had appeared in 1809. Her *Lettres à Horace Walpole* and her *Lettres à Voltaire* were published in 1810, and no doubt Juliette had read them. But, better educated and more literary though we must admit that she was, since Sainte-Beuve calls her one of the purest of the eighteenth century classics, Mme. du Deffand, with all her intelligence, all her vigour, and all her fire, had neither the reserve nor the charm of Juliette. Walpole had more than one characteristic which made him resemble Chateaubriand, and Juliette, we can imagine, was aware of this; but the tenderness which with Mme. du Deffand was only by fits and starts was the basis of Mme. Récamier's character and the very woof of her life. She was always more calm, more chaste, and all that was romantic in her was more natural and better controlled.

There were still a few new arrivals whom she welcomed to her circle. Charles Brifaute who was no longer young, but whom she had not known earlier;² Ozanam, who was so timid, and who soon became J. J. Ampère's intimate friend;³ Alexis de Tocqueville, who in 1835, when he was scarcely thirty years of age, published with well-deserved success his *Démocratie en Amérique* in two volumes.⁴ But she remained faithful before all things to the old friends who had grouped themselves around her. Sainte-Beuve, when touching on his souvenirs, liked to sketch certain figures of that *salon*, which on certain days seemed more like an infirmary. He had a very vivid remembrance of old Forbin-Janson. "We used to meet him on the staircase, being carried by a domestic, looking like a veritable ruin, a shadow, or a dead person. As soon as the door opened and a maid appeared it was as though a spring had been touched, for a smile immediately began to play over his face. And he would enter in a grand way, bow gallantly and, from time to time, smiling eternally, utter rather

¹ Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, I, p. 419.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 492.

³ *Mme. R. et ses amis*, p. 316; *Souv. et Corr.*, II, 490-491. He came to the Abbaye in 1840.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 490; *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 307.

clever witticisms, which Mme. Récamier would answer and make the most of, and the old man would say, "Ah, that is worthy of Forbin!"¹

In 1835 there were fresh readings of the *Mémoires* at the Abbaye. Mrs. Trollope, who at this time was travelling about in Europe with her own ill-humour for company, was present at one of these assemblies. She heard Ampère read the journey to Prague. There were not more than seventeen persons that day. "A regular circle was not made ; the ladies were rather near the sofa, which was under the picture of Corinne, and the men were in groups behind them."² Mme. Tastu was publishing her *Poésies nouvelles*, and put in a rather mediocre piece to M. de Chateaubriand on the readings of his *Mémoires*. In the notes at the end of the volume³ she thanked Mme. Récamier for having procured her a favour very much in demand.

In July the Abbaye-aux-Bois society was transported to Dieppe.⁴

On the 12th of July Ballanche wrote to Mme. Lenormant as follows :

"Madame,

"All our congratulations for your fine Saint-Eloy fêtes. We were awaiting the account impatiently. Our *Odyssey* has also had its charms. M. de Chateaubriand met us on the way, and had a magnificent supper prepared at the place where we put up the second day. After taking supper with us he continued his journey. Ampère joined us at Rouen, and travelled with us. M. de Chateaubriand was awaiting us at Dieppe. He had found the rooms where

¹ *Journal des Goncourt*, II, 1863, p. 81. M. Maurice Muret (*Revue bleue*, July 12th, 1902) compares Mme. Récamier's *salon* to that of Princesse Belgiojoso. About Princesse Belgiojoso and her intercourse with Mme. Récamier, see Raffaello Barbiera's work (*La Principessa Belgiojoso*, Milan, 1902), particularly p. 205 and following.

² *Paris and the Parisians in 1835*, Letter LX.

³ P. 368. *M.O.T.*, édit. Biré, VI, p. 543 and following.

⁴ Sainte-Beuve's letter, which is so amiable as far as the Abbaye was concerned, and which is published in the *Nouvelle Correspondance*, p. 34 and following, should be dated July 15th, 1835, and not July 15th, 1836.

Mme. Récamier stayed before at the Hôtel d'Albion. She went to them and is remaining there."¹

Lacordaire was at Dieppe at the same time.² Ballanche told him of Mme. Récamier's great desire to see him. He called on her, and was introduced to Chateaubriand, whom he did not yet know. He was present at the reading of the account of the Hundred Days in the *Mémoires*, and was delighted with it. "His style is always the same," he wrote to Mme. Swetchine ;³ "he is the king of expression."

Chateaubriand only stayed a week at Dieppe. He arrived in Paris the very day on which Fieschi's infernal machine killed Marshal Mortier and eighteen other persons. He heard of the event from a cabman.⁴ "The harm of all that," he said to Mme. Récamier, "besides the crime, is to make the existence of the new monarchy seem uncertain to everyone, and perhaps to cause the Government to take measures against liberty, and by those very measures it will increase its danger.⁵ If any law is proposed against the liberty of the press I shall be obliged to write ; that is my great difficulty."⁶

Ballanche had also returned to Paris. He wrote several letters to Mme. Récamier, describing to her the state of opinion, and telling her about the lugubrious ceremony, when there had been a procession of fourteen hearses, the first of which was that of a young girl and the last one that of a Marshal of France. In one of these letters he gave some interesting reflections :

"I did not think," he says to Mme. Récamier, "that the Government would have presented the laws it has presented. Wise and prudent people are alarmed. I fear very much that the Government in this was unfortunately biassed,

¹ Unpublished letter. Lyons Library MSS., Coste, 15671. Vingt-rinier, 1103, Desverney et Molinier.

² See his *Correspondance avec Mme. Swetchine*, p. 38 and following.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁴ See his letters to Mme. Récamier in *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 316 and following.

⁵ Letter of July 29th.

⁶ Letter of July 31st. From henceforth all Chateaubriand's letters that we borrow will be taken from the second volume of the originals, unless we give any special indication. We shall only mention the number of the first page of the letter.

as it was for the question of the amnesty. It wanted to resist some and conciliate others. That is a very bad system. Those to whom the condescension is shown are not at all grateful for it. Those against whom force is used are more and more exasperated.

"At this moment the Government can do as it wishes, but always on condition of being responsible later on for its acts. Later on neither the reasons nor the motives are taken into consideration. Henri IV's *juste milieu* produced twenty-four attempted crimes, one of which resulted in his being killed. It certainly seems as though the assassin is not the inventor, but the executor; that he has not, himself, any real conviction; that he was paid, and thought he should personally escape.

"You understand that I do not attribute the invention to any party, but to a few men, and I must own that at present I do not allow myself any conjecture with regard to the opinion of these men. There are in all the different parties men so exasperated that it makes one shudder. I have met men of the two extreme opinions, and the way in which they give their ideas, in reference to a catastrophe about which there ought to be only one manner of feeling causes one the saddest reflections.

"What adds to all this is the small amount of grieved sympathy which I noticed in the population. This symptom had already struck me on the evening of the 29th, in the midst of the immense population hurrying to the Champs-Elysées; it struck me equally at yesterday's ceremony. Here is the King, then, making personally his profession of faith. Here is the clergy feeling itself obliged to explain why it thinks itself compelled to accord the sanction of its ministry. Here is the Government starting on the path opposed to the path of conciliation. Here are the different parties, instead of being subdued by a painful impression, more and more exasperated. Here is the population returning to its debilitated tranquillity until some fresh conjuncture. Here are the newspapers, which will continue to be the not very faithful organs of opinions and, added to this, they will say that they are under the yoke. Here is religion about to

enter, so to speak, furtively into affairs instead of entering openly—that is to say, providentially and charitably. I am anxious, therefore, and I am not the only one who is anxious.”¹

Mme. Récamier left Dieppe to go to the Château of Maintenon, the country house of the Duc de Noailles,² where she found her friend Laval. Chateaubriand went there to fetch her,³ and at the beginning of September the Abbaye society met again in Paris. Chateaubriand talked of “refurnishing the house” as soon as he had sold his *Mémoires*. “You can judge,” wrote Mme. Récamier to her niece, “whether I shall encourage this idea. . . . I shall then take another room in the Abbaye, we will give a dinner every fortnight, and I shall spend two or three months of the fine season with you in the charming valley. M. de Chateaubriand will go to the little inn that he already knows.”⁴ Chateaubriand, in spite of his thankless labour, was delighted with these plans. All honour was done to his *Mémoires*, and at the end of November, 1835, Mme. Swetchine obtained from him the promise of a reading.⁵ Mme. Récamier did all in her power to improve his ill-humour. By the most skilful diplomacy she managed to satisfy the self-esteem of an old poet eager to welcome the least praise and quick to resent the slightest criticism.

Sainte-Beuve in his *Chateaubriana*⁶ gives a note he had found in an old memorandum book. We must quote it in full, as Mme. Récamier can there be seen at work, struggling with two of the great men of her *salon*, Chateaubriand and Lamartine. There is no more vivid picture than this one.

“The other day,” writes Sainte-Beuve, “I was at Mme. Récamier’s. There was no one else there but Chateaubriand; Lamartine was then announced. *Jocelyn* had appeared during

¹ Unpublished letter, without any address. It is dated by mistake July 6th. M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

² *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 202.

³ See letter of August 5th, 1835, second volume, p. 60. *Esquisse d’un Maître*, p. 322. Read, line 15: “I saw M. and Mme. Le Normant.”

⁴ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 203. The charming note from Chateaubriand, published in *Esquisse d’un Maître*, p. 323, is dated in the original (p. 64) not November 9th, but September 5th.

⁵ *Lettres de Mme. Swetchine*, published by Falloux, II, p. 159–160.

⁶ *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 389 and following.

the week, and everyone was talking of it.¹ Mme. Récamier, with her usual alacrity,² started at once on the subject. ‘I am reading your book, Monsieur; we are reading it, and it has given us a great deal of pleasure; M. de Chateaubriand especially is very much charmed with it.’ Chateaubriand, thus called upon to offer his testimony, did not utter a word. He took his silk necktie, according to his habit, and held it between his teeth, as he does when he has decided not to speak. He bites his scarf at such times and pulls it now and then with his hand, holding it all the time with his teeth, and his old friends call this habit of his *ringing the bell*. He rang the bell, then, without saying anything, and Mme. Récamier was all the more amiable in order that his silence should be less noticeable. ‘You have had criticisms with very little foundation, Monsieur,’ she said to Lamartine, ‘about the marriage of priests, and about the style, which is so pure, so charming.’ Lamartine had at once, and without any ceremony, entered into this praise of himself. At Mme. Récamier’s first compliment he interrupted her to ask *how many times she had read it*. ‘Oh, this is the first time,’ she replied. ‘Because,’ he continued, ‘the book cannot be thoroughly appreciated before the second reading.’ ‘But with only this first time,’ she said, ‘I have no difficulty in understanding how many beautiful things there are which will gain much by being read again.’ When she pronounced the word *style*, and said something about the unjust criticisms which had been made on this point, Lamartine exclaimed, ‘The style, but it is precisely that of which I have been most careful. I have gone over it with a *magnifying glass*.’ After the conversation had been carried on for some time in this way, Mme. Récamier praising the book and Lamartine helping her with his naïve fatuity, he went away. She accompanied him as far as the second drawing-room, continuing her compliments. The door had scarcely closed on him when Chateaubriand, who had not hitherto uttered a word, although Mme. Récamier had laid

¹ This is in 1836, then.

² See her kind letter of February 13th, 1836, to Mme. Desbordes-Valmore. Arthur Pougin, *La jeunesse de Mme. Desbordes-Valmore*, p. 124.

stress on his opinion in her praises, burst out suddenly, as though he had been alone, with the exclamation : ‘The great booby !’ I was there myself and heard it.”

During this year 1836, Chateaubriand published his translation of *Paradise Lost* and two other volumes, *Essai sur la littérature anglaise* and *Considérations sur le génie des hommes, des temps et des révolutions*.¹ His friends wanted to form a company, which should purchase his *Mémoires* and ensure the tranquillity of his last days. The company was formed in June 1836, thanks particularly to the activity of the publisher Delloye. Chateaubriand received £10,000 and an annuity of £480. It was agreed upon that the *Mémoires* should not appear during his lifetime. This arrangement gave him great relief.

The translation of *Paradise Lost* brought Chateaubriand Fauriel’s praises. In exchange for these compliments Chateaubriand offered afresh to Fauriel, in a letter dated July 6th, “the tribute of his most sincere admiration.”² In connection with this letter is the following one to Mme. Récamier, which has never been published :

“ Monday the 15th [July 1836].

“ I was assailed by visitors this morning, the last of whom was M. Royer-Collard. He has left me ; and I am not dressed, and have proofs to correct, and a violent headache. I do not feel capable of going out, and that distresses me, for not to see you is not living. Farewell, then, until to-morrow. And truly, when I am twenty-four hours without seeing you it seems to me that it is a long farewell. My reply to M. Fauriel was sent to M. Didot. Would you be kind enough to tell M. Ampère ? ”³

Poor Jean-Jacques was just then in great trouble. André-Marie Ampère had died at Marseilles on the 10th of June. Mme. Récamier did her utmost to console a very affectionate son. “ Why did you go away without seeing me ? ” she wrote to him.⁴ “ Who can understand you and pity you more than

¹ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 235. ² *Ibid.*, p. 239.

³ M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

⁴ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

I do? Come as soon as you can; I shall be alone. I have thought of you all the time since this fearful trouble. I am expecting you. Why should you not come before the evening?"

In July Chateaubriand went with Mme. de Chateaubriand to pay a visit to Hyde de Neuville,¹ who was then living at the Château of Lestang in the department of Cher. Mme. Récamier took up her abode for a time with her niece at Chapelle Saint-Eloi, near Beaumont-le-Roger in the department of Eure.² Chateaubriand wrote to her as follows the first time:

“L’ÉTANG, (*sic*) NEAR SANCERRE,
“July 27th, 1836.³

“We had all kinds of unfortunate adventures on the way; that is what happens when I leave you. This place is very beautiful and I should like it fairly well with the excellent persons who live here, if I could like any place without you. Come back to me. I miss you too much. I do not want to travel any more. I am so depressed by your absence that I cannot even write. . . . I have no strength for anything. Come and tell me about Saint-Eloi. We will think about it if possible for the future. I shall expect a few lines from you to help me to live.”

On the 2nd of August (the original is dated by mistake the 2nd of July) he sent her this fresh letter, the greater part of which has been published in the *Souvenirs et Correspondance*:⁴

“SANCERRE, Tuesday, 2nd [August], 1836.

“You have not had the *long letter*, but two notes which were worth more. There were not any of those *details* which you give me and of which I speak in the *Correspondance*, but a deep regret not to be with you and the weariness of a separation which seems to me eternal. We certainly leave next Saturday the 6th, and shall be in Paris on Sunday the 7th. Wait until then at Saint-Eloi; I will write to you from Paris. If I see any hope of going to fetch you, I will let you

¹ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 240.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 448.

³ No. 87, unpublished letter.

⁴ II, pp. 448 and 449, No. 85 of the collection (second volume).

know, as, for your health's sake, I think the stay in those pleasant valleys will be good for you. If I cannot be free, you will come back and restore me to life. I am not doing anything here; I do not read a paper even; I do not trouble about anything but you. You are from henceforth all that I have for my future and my life. Pray for the Holy Land pilgrim in your little chapel."¹

Chateaubriand went to spend a few days at Chapelle Saint-Eloi,² and then all the Abbaye went to the Château of Maintenon in Eure-et-Loir, the dwelling built by Jean Cottereau, Treasurer of the Exchequer under Louis XI, which Louis XIV bought for Scarron's widow. Chateaubriand dated from Maintenon a chapter which was to be in the *Mémoires*, but which was not put in; the manuscript was given to Mme. Récamier only.³ Then the Abbaye went to see the Duc de Laval at his Montigny estate. Ballanche was more enterprising and more enthusiastic than ever. His dream always was to undertake important business affairs.⁴ He was prepared to sacrifice his fortune for the millions that he would win. He planned to buy back for three or four hundred thousand francs the *Mémoires*, which Chateaubriand now regretted having sold, and by plans of this kind he was always in endless embarrassment.

Chateaubriand left his group of friends, and returned to Paris before them. He said he was "weary of all movement,"⁵ and counted now on spending the rest of his life in writing "one or two pages a day" of his *Mémoires*. He had been greatly distressed by the death of poor Armand Carrel, who was killed in a duel by Émile de Girardin on the 24th of July. It is probable, too, that all the Abbaye shared his grief. He was very unhappy now in Paris without his faithful friend, and he told her that he had "spent a day seated on the stones of the Place Louis XV looking at the obelisk,

¹ Another letter, No. 86, is dated July 26th.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 451.

³ See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 453 and following; Biré, edit. of the *M.O.T.*, VI, p. 534 and following.

⁴ See the letter from Mme. Récamier to her niece, *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, pp. 205-206.

⁵ Letter of August 8th (*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 430).

or rather not looking at anything."¹ "The *Revue de Paris*," he added in his letter of the same day, "contains a very rough article by Nisard; Sainte-Beuve is content therefore; he will not be stopped anyhow by the praises of Nisard."

But Sainte-Beuve resisted the invitations that may have been sent him. Not that he was on bad terms with the Abbaye. In his little volume on Sainte-Beuve M. d'Haussonville published the long letter that the author of *Joseph Delorme* sent to J. J. Ampère on the 15th of July, 1835, on the subject of the Abbaye-aux-Bois.² "Tell M. de Chateaubriand," he says at the end, "how sure we are that his translation worries will mean a fresh and unique monument for us. Thank him, too, for the special kindnesses with which he has always honoured me, and which I appreciate greatly. I can say the same for Mme. Récamier, who wrongs me very much sometimes by appearing to doubt the deep and respectful affection that I owe to that gracious kindness which forms an era in my life, and it is the duty of that delicate kindness to give up doubting what it inspires." On the 14th of January, 1836,³ he signed the verses to Mme. Récamier, *Sur un portrait de Gérard*, which he published in the third volume of his *Critiques et portraits littéraires*.

But he had, as he said himself, his "remains of caprice and resistance." He refused "blankly" to speak of *L'Essai sur la littérature anglaise*. This *Essai*, he wrote,⁴ "seemed to me incomplete, too classical, not rendering justice to the latest great poets of England, whom M. de Chateaubriand did not appear to know. The book passed by, therefore, without my greeting it with an article. I wrote my reasons for this in detail to Ampère, and M. de Chateaubriand had the good taste to owe me no grudge for it."

That year Mme. Récamier returned rather late to Paris. On arriving she heard of the Strasbourg affair. On the 26th of October, Charles Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte had tried,

¹ Letter of October 17th (*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 452).

² P. 95 and following. The same text in *Nouvelle correspondance de Sainte-Beuve*, p. 34 and following. The letter must date from 1835. M. d'Haussonville published, in the same work (p. 212 and following), three letters from Sainte-Beuve to Mme. R.

³ See *C.L.A.R.*, No. 112.

⁴ *Portr. cont.*, I, p. 80.

with the help of Colonel Vaudrey, to organize a military movement and overthrow Louis-Philippe. He was arrested and, after a short imprisonment, sent to the United States. Louis Bonaparte having been taken to Paris to be judged,¹ the Duchesse de Saint-Leu installed herself at Viry at the house of the Duchesse de Raguse. Mme. Salvage took refuge at the Abbaye. Mme. Récamier went to see Queen Hortense, who died soon afterwards.

She was rather ill herself about this time.² Her health was variable, and she could not sleep. In 1837 she began to cough a great deal, and her voice could scarcely be heard. Dr. Récamier, fortunately, was able to affirm that she was only suffering from a nervous trouble.

Prince Augustus of Prussia knew of Mme. Récamier's illness and, on the 20th of February, 1837, he wrote to her from Berlin to ask for news of her health. He tried to persuade her at the same time to write her *Mémoires*.³ A few months later, when he was in quarantine near Trieste after a long voyage, he wrote a very long letter to her, addressed to the Abbaye-aux-Bois,⁴ full of interesting details about his travels in Turkey and in Greece. "On arriving at Athens," he wrote, "I was received in the kindest way. The city is still in ruins, and the country, which is very arid, is only interesting on account of its beautiful memories. In spite of the fury of barbarians, the animosity of war, and the avidity of Lord Elgin, the Acropolis and its environs still contain the finest monuments of ancient architecture. The Temple of Theseus is entirely preserved, the Parthenon, the Temple of Erechtheus and the Gate of Propylaea partially so, and the Temple of Victory has just been freed from its rubbish. Athens is beginning to revive."

On the 16th of June, 1837, the Duc de Laval died in Paris.⁵ Ever since 1830, this cultivated man had lived the life of a

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 274 and following.

² *Ibid.*, p. 478 and following.

³ According to an unpublished letter, No. 104 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ Dated November 5th, 1837, No. 105 of the series. Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁵ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 473.

sage on his Montigny estate.¹ One must read his last letters to Mme. Récamier² in order to realize with what serenity the former Ambassador to Madrid, Rome, Vienna, and London bore his retirement, and how keen his intelligence remained. He beautified his *casa*, as he called his home, and was so much taken up with this *restoration* that he lost his sleep through it. A kind of arbour which he had put up in Italian style reminded him of Rome. He built a terrace. "It is so elegant to raise columns," he wrote. He bought "orange and lemon trees with round tops." But, rusticated and half asleep as he now declared himself to be, Juliette's witty friend was still able to send her compliments and madrigals in the following style: "Among my numberless roses of all kinds and of every origin I do not see any as beautiful and as fresh as the one I saw and admired in all its splendour and perfume a few years ago, in the Chaussée d'Antin."

One could not expect so refined and cultured a representative of the French past to welcome the severer beauty of the new ideas. He looked coldly on progress, and he explained his attitude to his old friend Ballanche. He consented willingly, though, to the creation of nobility for genius and intelligence. "To spread knowledge," he said, "is assuredly quite as good as to shed blood. I say this quite sincerely: my ignorance readily signs this contract with science."³ But this elegant *grand seigneur*, who for the sole daily companion of his life had only a lame gazelle, which he considered as charming as Mme. de la Vallière, this man of drawing-rooms and embassies, turned away from what he styled the horrors and abominations of the present. "We have had," he wrote to Ballanche, "monarchical times, revolutionary times, and difficult times, but we have now entered upon impossible times. No longer any means of governing, because there are no longer any means of justice. To punish the guilty is beyond this Government. The evil is too widespread. And note well, my dear sir, that, without this power of making one's self feared and of punishing,

¹ Near Cloyes, Eure-et-Loir.

² M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

³ Letter to Ballanche, dated August 2nd, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

generosity and clemency cannot be exercised, popularity cannot be acquired, and authority is not respected."

A strange theory, certainly. This kind of political testament warns us that we must not take Adrien de Montmorency's mind for a very vigorous or very discerning one. He had the qualities of many of the most distinguished men of his rank belonging to the eighteenth century, but for Mme. Récamier, who gave him great pleasure for the last time by going to see him at Montigny in 1836,¹ for the woman he had loved with all his soul, and who at a certain time had entirely possessed his heart, he had been, under great difficulties, the most generous, discreet, and attentive friend, and he had kept to the *rôle* which she had assigned to him. That *rôle* was not an easy one: it had required a certain art to accept refusals without being offended by them, and to render services without laying claim to anything in return.

In spite of grief caused by death, and in spite of ill-health, Mme. Récamier compelled herself to change nothing in her life, in order not to disturb the habits which had grown so dear to her friends. She continued to have readings in her *salon*. In November, 1837, Quinet read the third part of his *Prométhée*. "She was," as he wrote himself,² "lying down on a sofa to my right. She was as beautiful and well-dressed as usual, but she could only talk with her lips. At the corner of the mantelpiece was M. de Chateaubriand, another wreck just as magnificent. A niece of Mme. Récamier's and the two intimate friends, Ballanche and Ampère, were also there. Then, too, there was another person, who among these fine ruins looked like one of the black dwarfs in the pictures by Rubens. In such choice society I expected some politeness, and my expectations were realized. The only thing which touched me was to hear, later on, that M. de Chateaubriand said afterwards he was convinced that *Prométhée* was the best of my works. Mme. Récamier seemed to be fairly affected by it and edified, and the reader withdrew satisfied with the incense and smoke."

¹ See *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 470 and following.

² *Lettres à sa mère*, II, pp. 284-285.

Sainte-Beuve was read with interest during his absence. The preliminary speech with which he opened his lectures at Lausanne had been published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and was read at the Abbaye.¹ "Everyone was very pleased with it, M. de Chateaubriand included," reports Ampère. "Some one had denounced one phrase to him as disparaging to the majesty of the seventeenth century. It is the one in which you show the sixteenth and the eighteenth uniting again in spite of what had been interposed between them. Mme. Récamier and I took up the phrase in order to defend it. I explained the general meaning of your idea, which, when expressed rapidly, lent itself perhaps to a wrong interpretation. I give you these details to show you how keenly interested your friends were in this piece. I may add there was complete satisfaction. M. and Mme. Lenormant were charmed, Ballanche, the hypercritical M. Paul² also. Mme. Lenormant likes the exposition, so simple and so touchingly dramatic, of Bérulle, Saint-Vincent de Paul, and the founder of the Community of Saint-Nicolas du Chardonnet deliberating on what is to be done for religion. Mme. Récamier prefers the second part; she also specially likes the contrast of the two scenes which follow the death of M. de Saci and that of Mother Agnes; in the one the Sisters, and in the other the men only being able to finish the chants."

Ballanche was publishing in the *Revue de Paris*, *La Tapisserie fée*.³ After the death of Charles X some of the

¹ See J. J. Ampère's letter of January 9th, 1838. *Port Royal*, fifth edition, I, p. 518.

² Paul David.

³ On Friday, June 10th, 1838, Sainte-Beuve wrote to M. and Mme. Juste Olivier as follows: "Ampère has just left me, and has been telling me about the Abbaye-aux-Bois, where Mme. Récamier has returned, by no means cured. They are all happy, pleasant, and young there, from four to six o'clock. I shall go to-morrow. I shall see M. de Chateaubriand crowned with his Verona laurels; M. Ballanche more devout than ever, spending his capital together with his income—in short, the little guest chamber complete." Writing again on June 18th, he said: "Mme. Récamier, who sees a great many people again, and whose voice goes and then comes back again instantly with a ray of sunshine like a daughter of the dawn, is also leaving for the country, but she will not stay long. Yesterday, at five o'clock, she had in her *salon* M. de Chateaubriand, M. Ballanche, M. Ampère, a Mme. Salvage, the friend and legatee of Queen Hortense, great Colonel of the Empire, great Bonapartist, considering that it is more than ever the moment for Prince Louis (absolutely

Royalists wished Chateaubriand to be consulted with regard to the education of the Duc de Bordeaux, but this time the old servitor showed signs of weariness and discouragement.¹ He was preparing his account of the Congress of Verona and of the Spanish war, and refused to stand as a candidate for the Chamber of Deputies. His plan now was to go and take a little rest at Dieppe. A fellow citizen of Mme. Récamier's, the learned Collombet, showed him the most delicate attentions. He dedicated to him a translation of the *Lettres de Saint-Jérôme*,² and in a very interesting letter of September 28th, 1837, he sent him Silvio Pellico's very eulogistic criticism of *Le génie du Christianisme*.³

At the end of October, 1837, Chateaubriand left. "Are you in Paris?" he wrote to Mme. Récamier on the 28th.⁴ "I doubt it. I am going away with my heart heavy at leaving you for a few days, but I want to breathe a little, and to get away from this *Dies iræ* and this week's catafalque. I have enough with my own woes. May I find you cured on my return! I will write to you on arriving at the place where I settle down. A hundred messages to friends. I am at your service for ever. If this does not reach you in Paris, I shall send it to Passy."

like M. de Genoude or M. de la Rochefoucauld for Henri V) and saying so aloud. Her thesis yesterday was that if M. de Lafayette had not been dead, he would have worked for the Bonapartist Restoration, and that he had made the *most sacred* engagements with Prince Louis. She had seen the letters; she took everything for granted. It was impossible to get a word of amendment, of common sense. She went away triumphant like an ensign-bearer, glancing at the Bonapartist pamphlets which had been left on the mantelshelf and brought there that morning. The Duchesse de Raguse then arrived. She was formerly charming, but at present is a regular ball, with half her nose missing as a result of a cancer which is fortunately cured. She is always witty, though. Everyone laughed at Mme. Salvage whilst recognizing the sincerity of her devotion, for, even when jeering, everyone must be charitable at Mme. Récamier's. We may then make fun more at our ease and with a better conscience. I forgot to mention among the witnesses and new-comers M. Briffaut of the Academy, and the Duc de Noailles. Altogether the assembly was a delightful one." See, too, the letter of June 21st (*Lettres de Sainte-Beure à M. et Mme. Juste Olivier, Revue des Deux Mondes*, October 15th, 1903).

¹ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 252 and following.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 254 and 255.

³ Lyons Library MSS., Coste (No. 113, Desverney et Molinier).

⁴ No. 100 of the collection.

He settled at Chantilly,¹ and on the 6th of November he wrote to Juliette from there :

"I have received a very sad letter from M. Ampère. Do not ever talk of what would become of me without you. If you asked me I could not tell you. But, seriously, I have not wronged Heaven enough for it not to call me before you. I am glad to find that I am ill, that I had another turn yesterday, and that I do not get back my strength in spite of my expeditions. I shall thank God for all that as long as you persist in not getting better, so that my health is in your hands. Just think, yesterday I made up my mind to finish that Spanish affair even if I had to work too much. It is done, and I have only to read it over now. Mme. de Ch. has written to me : she worries me greatly with her plans and her hundreds of miseries. What would suit me would be to be your nurse, now that I have retired. I am good for nothing but to care for you. Do not forget our friends, and thank M. Ampère."²

To this letter we must add the following one, which we believe has never been published. It is addressed to Ampère :

"CHANTILLY, November 4th, 1837.

"Thank you a thousand times, Monsieur. I should be doubly happy to have news of Mme. Récamier, and to have this news from you, provided it should be good. But you do not tell me whether she is in Paris, and I am still in doubt. Towards the end of next week I shall be with her. I have made great advance with my work in this dreary forest. I must hurry with it. It will cost me a great deal, though, to give up this part of my *Mémoires* in order to live, if I should be obliged to do so. I recommend them to you, Monsieur : they are yours ; you are in them, and you will be in them still more. I am leaning on you so that I may have strength. Work, finish your very fine novel and your serious studies. Your name will continue in the future, where your father has

¹ See his letter, No. 101, published almost entirely in *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 324, and Biré, work quoted, p. 258.

² No. 105. A short fragment of this text in *Souv. et Corr.* The letter is addressed to Mme. Récamier, Rue d'Anjou-Saint-Honoré No. 30.

already placed it. All my homages at Mme. Récamier's feet, I beg, and accept yourself the assurance of my very sincere attachment, devotion, and gratitude.

“CHATEAUBRIAND.

“Remember me to the Lyons philosopher.”¹

Mme. Récamier, who was far from well all the time, had accepted for the winter of 1837–1838 the use of a small house, belonging to Baron Pasquier, in Rue d'Anjou-Saint-Honoré.² After the Revolution of 1830, the former Prefect of Police had been appointed by Louis-Philippe President of the Chamber of Peers. In 1837 he was raised to the dignity of Chancellor. The Comtesse de Boigne had brought him and Mme. Récamier together, and it was through this intermediary that Chateaubriand's friend received this kind offer, of which she took advantage for four months.

Ballanche felt himself getting old, but he consoled himself easily. “Our poor life is passing away inch by inch,” he said to Mme. Récamier. “As far as I am concerned, I do not complain. I have had some delightful days with you, and that is enough for me.”³ He was strengthened, too, by his absolute belief in Christianity. “I think,” he said again, “that it is psychology absolute and consequently definitive. I certainly admit something progressive in Christianity, but in this sense only, that as the human faculty becomes more apt at comprehending, it penetrates further into the comprehension of dogma, and that dogma, from the beginning, contains all that enters successively into human intelligence.”⁴ J. J. Ampère gave way gradually to his taste for travelling. He was preparing for that long expedition which he undertook in September, 1838, with Charles Lenormant and Jean de Witte, and which he calls his *Voyage dantesque*. With the *Divine Comedy* in his hand he wanted to visit Tuscany and

¹ From the copy of a letter belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie.

² *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 480 and following.

³ Unpublished letter, without any date, No. 126 in M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.

⁴ Unpublished letter, undated, No. 129 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Ballanche's letters, published in *Sour. et Corr.*, II, pp. 484 and 485, are also of this year (1838). The address is Mme. Récamier, chez Mme. la Comtesse de Boigne, à Châtenay par Antoni, Banlieue de Paris.

Lombardy, and search on the spot for any souvenirs left by the great Florentine.¹

In July, 1838,² Chateaubriand undertook a journey in the South of France. Mme. Récamier went to Mme. de Boigne's at Châtenay. "I was to have started at noon to-day," the great traveller wrote to Juliette,³ "but thanks to Mme. de Ch. I cannot leave until to-morrow. Since I must leave you, I should like to have gone a hundred leagues already and to have come back to you; from henceforth travelling will not appeal to me. I have only one sentiment and one joy, and that is to finish life near to you. I am delighted with our future arrangements and the idea of not being more than ten minutes away from your door: living in the past in my souvenirs, in the present and the future with you, I am determined to make happiness out of everything, even out of your injustices. It will be a great charm for me to pass away protected by your glance, your words, your attachment. And then God, Heaven, and you beyond this life!"⁴ . . . Chateaubriand went through Clermont, where he had the greatest success. He visited Rodez, Albi, Toulouse, spent his nights travelling, reached Montpellier, and then went to Nîmes, Marseilles,⁵ and Cannes. He had commenced his impression of the Verona Congress in January. When he returned to Paris in August, he established himself at 112 Rue du Bac (at present No. 120), in the flat in which he died. It was a great joy for him to be only ten minutes' walk from his friend's door.⁶

Mme. Récamier was now leading a more and more retired life. She scarcely went out at all, except to the theatre. "I have been to the rehearsal of the opera by Berlioz," she wrote on the 3rd of September, 1838.⁷ "The house was very

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 299 and following. See in *Heures de poésie* the piece entitled *Amitié* (p. 26). It is dated 1838.

² Not in June (Lenormant). See *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 482.

³ July 5th. No. 109, *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 326.

⁴ Address, Mme. Récamier, Châtenay.

⁵ See his letter, No. 112 in *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 327; his letter, No. 116, *ibid.*, p. 329, and *Souv. et Corr.*, II, 485; his letter No. 118, *ibid.*, p. 330. It is August 1st, 1838, and not June 17th, 1842, that the letter should be dated which Chateaubriand wrote to J. J. Ampère, and which is published in *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 115.

⁶ *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 327; Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 267.

⁷ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 206.

full, the public very cold, and I was like the public, for I was so tired and had such a bad seat that even Dupré gave me no pleasure." It was about this time that she made the acquaintance of Rachel Félix, who was then very young. After a wretched childhood at Lyons she had entered the Conservatoire and, through Samson, was admitted to the Théâtre Français in 1838.¹ Mme. Récamier met her at Mme. Ancelot's the day after that celebrated performance of the *Horaces* at which the new Camille roused such enthusiasm. Juliette had decided to go with Ballanche to hear the tragedian. "The young actress," Mme. Ancelot tells us, "had hitherto not been into society, and I had to tell her aside who Mme. Récamier was, as she had never heard her mentioned."²

Mme. Récamier's chief pleasure was to organize these readings which brought together in her *salon* a few chosen friends. Sometimes these meetings gave rise to incidents. In 1838 Delécluze was finishing the work that he published under the title of *David, son école et son temps*. He went to read the first two chapters at the Abbaye. The Duc de Noailles was present with several members of his family, among others Mme. de Mouchy. Sainte-Beuve, too, was there. Now it happened that formerly, when Delécluze was studying under David, one of his fellow students was the charming sister of Alexandre de Laborde, Mme. Charles de Noailles. One day when she was painting he was gazing at her. "Her dark chestnut hair, tied with narrow bands of red ribbon in antique style, showed up the whiteness of her throat, which was slender and very beautiful. This red and the white neck suddenly struck Etienne's imagination—and it seemed to him that he saw this charming woman's head fall." Etienne had the bad taste to read this passage before the daughter of Mme. de Noailles and before several persons who had lost relatives by the Revolution. Chateaubriand, who thought of his brother, became very gloomy. Farther on the reader began to give a description of the dirtiness of the Louvre, and made use of expressions that were by no means choice. Lacretelle, who

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 206.

² *Un salon de Paris*, p. 71. Compare Delécluze, *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 301; Véron, *Mémoires d'un bourgeois de Paris*, IV, p. 149 and following.

was just entering, made a grimace. Etienne attempted to correct himself and to shorten the passage, but he became confused, saw that he had lost the thread of his story, turned back, and inflicted his audience with two readings instead of one of what they would rather not have heard.¹

The rôle which Sainte-Beuve played in the publication of the works of Fontanes in 1839 is well known.² These were for the first time "collected and completed according to the original manuscripts." They appeared, preceded by a letter from M. de Chateaubriand,³ with a biographical notice by M. Roger, of the French Academy, and another one by M. Sainte-Beuve. As early as 1838, Sainte-Beuve had finished writing this notice, and he read part of it to Mme. Récamier and to Chateaubriand.⁴ "At this meeting," writes the critic, "besides Mme. Récamier and M. de Chateaubriand, there were only M. Ballanche, Mme. Lenormant, and a friend of mine, M. Magnin, who had been invited by Mme. Lenormant."⁵ A few days later Sainte-Beuve finished reading this notice to the same persons, with the addition of M. de Cazalès.⁶ Chateaubriand seemed pleased with it, and offered a few observations. This was the first time since he had been writing that Sainte-Beuve had read anything in advance and submitted to the criticisms of friends what he was about to publish.

This notice caused a slight conflict between the Comtesse Christine de Fontanes and the writer, who insisted in maintaining his independence, and would not sacrifice any of the details he had given in his notice.⁷ Mme. Récamier and Chateaubriand smoothed over the difficulties; and it was agreed that Sainte-Beuve should yield to the wishes of Mme. de Fontanes in the article destined for the volume, and that he should have full liberty in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.⁸ This is why the sketch of Fontanes is

¹ See Delécluze, *Souvenirs de soixante années*, p. 302, and Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, III, p. 87 and following. ² Two volumes in-8.

³ See Pailhès, *Du nouveau sur Joubert*, p. 423 and following.

⁴ *Corr. de Sainte-Beuve*, I, p. 67; Pailhès, work quoted, p. 420 and following.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁷ See in *Corr. de Sainte-Beuve*, I, p. 73 and following, the letter to the Comtesse Chr. de Fontanes.

⁸ *Corr. de Sainte-Beuve*, I, p. 76 and following. For Mme. R.'s rôle in this matter, *ibid.*, pp. 90-92.

half a page shorter in the edition of the *Œuvres*. It is only given in full in the *Portraits littéraires*.

In 1839 Chateaubriand wrote those pages of his *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* which are devoted to Mme. Récamier.¹ They form now Book XI of the third part. Mme. Récamier's eyesight was beginning to fail her.² She could only read with difficulty and, although she was uneasy about it, she concealed her infirmity as much as possible. She continued to receive with the same graciousness and affability as ever.³ On the 26th of August, 1839, Marceline Desbordes-Valmore wrote to her husband as follows :

"The day before yesterday I was taken to Mme. Récamier's, who was expecting me, by M. de Sainte-Beuve, always the same—that is to say, *child, eagle, and butterfly*. I saw M. de Chateaubriand. I worked hard to get Hilaire's pension increased and to sell his picture for him. I saw M. Lenormant, who had come there to meet me because he likes me. It was he who helped to get me the indemnity granted by the Ministry. M. de Sainte-Beuve came back to dine with us three, as gay as a lark."⁴ On the 30th of August she writes : "Mme. Récamier, whom I saw again yesterday, and M. de Chateaubriand are kinder to me than ever. She talked with me about you, and she is going to do something both for you and the children later on. She has given me a beautiful book for Inès, and longs to see Line. Hippolyte left, wild with delight, for he has obtained permission to return there during my absence, and he heard the solemn reading of M. de Chateaubriand's *Mémoires*. I too have not experienced anything for a long time which took me so agreeably out of my troubles. I realized again for an hour what the power of genius is. M. de Chateaubriand listens to himself with honest severity. His reader spoke clearly and

¹ *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 371, note 1.

² *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 538. See Chateaubriand's letter to M. Fraser Frisell, Biré, work quoted, p. 294.

³ Chateaubriand's letter to Ampère, published in *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 108, should be dated January 24th, 1839, instead of September 2nd, 1841 (according to a copy belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie).

⁴ *Corr. intime de M. Desbordes-Valmore*, published by B. Rivière, I, pp. 176-177.

coldly, but oh, the style!—those eagle wings beating the air!"¹

Sainte-Beuve was now one of the most assiduous guests of the Abbaye. During the winter of 1839-1840 he read there some fragments of the first volume of his *Port-Royal*.² The Comtesse Christine de Fontanes was present at these meetings, which were for the writer, as he says himself, a "very keen stimulus."³ On the 15th of February, 1840, à propos of *L'Histoire littéraire de la France avant le douzième siècle*, he published a long article on J. J. Ampère. He put in a polite phrase on those "incomparable influences which are inestimable, and for which the Muses should be asked for a name."⁴

In 1840, as Mme. Récamier's throat was affected, she was sent by the doctors to Ems for the waters there. She went alone. "She left," says her niece,⁵ "on the 18th of July. Mme. Lenormant was in the country with her children, M. de Chateaubriand in Paris, and M. Ballanche at the Comtesse d'Hautefeuille's at Saint-Vrain."

We will once more quote a few fragments from unpublished letters written by Chateaubriand to her during this absence.⁶

"July 23rd, 1840.

"It is a very long time, though, a whole month without seeing you. I do nothing but repeat that, and I cannot find anything else to say to you.⁷ I know nothing but what the papers say. Of society nothing at all; I am bored to death.

¹ *Corr. intime de M. Desbordes-Valmore*, published by B. Rivière, pp. 179-180. From the same to the same on February 19th, 1840: "M. de Ballanche came himself yesterday in the name of Mme. Récamier, who was ill. What a sweet old man!" *Ibid.*, p. 191.

² On November 1st, 1839, Sainte-Beuve wrote to his friend Olivier: "I am going to read some of *Port-Royal* to-morrow to M. de Chateaubriand at Mme. Récamier's. Ampère read us the other day a little Gallo-Roman and Frank novel of the fifth century, a vignette appendix to his two volumes; it is very ingenious, and only wants a few light touches to be quite good." *Revue des Deux Mondes*, November 15th, 1903, p. 306.

³ *Corr. de Sainte-Beuve*, I, pp. 103-104. Compare Pailhès, *Du nouveau sur Joubert*, p. 431.

⁴ *Portr. cont.*, III, p. 365.

⁵ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 494.

⁶ To these should be added those published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 494, 496, 499, and in *Esquisse d'un Maître*, pp. 331, 333, 335.

⁷ Letter No. 140. Chateaubriand's writing is now very difficult to read.

I am going to see the monkeys, and a real Canadian beaver with a flat tail. It is my only consolation. I am told that there is no one in Paris. I believe it, since you are not there. We went on an expedition to Versailles : my admirations and my miseries were increased. We are burying our dead on Monday whilst waiting for the others. There is no secretary yet. M. David says that M. Ampère must not come back before this nomination. He still has faith about the prize. Here is some news, though, for you : a superb ship is to be launched at Bordeaux, and it is to bear my name in spite of my objections. What romantic things I could tell you about my shipwreck, about the winds, about my start and the haven, about the anchor, and the Mississippi where the *Chateaubriand* will land. But I am no longer so foolish. I have taken to these little scrawls now instead of my enormous letters ; at any rate I shall resemble you a little in this."

Strangely enough, Chateaubriand's handwriting does now rather resemble that of his friend. His difficulty in writing does not discourage him.

"PARIS, August 19th, 1840.¹

"I am like a poor beggar man, dependent on the public. I hear news of you from everyone. M. David tells me that you are better, that you are getting back your strength. I am delighted ; but could you not sometimes commission me to distribute your alms, instead of having to ask others for a small share of them ? I will not scold you, though, and interfere with the effect of the waters. Be tranquil then, for as long as you are well I shall be happy. . . . M. Ballanche is still blissful. He will only come back when you are here. Do not believe what is said about war. I shall expect you for the next birthday. If I could only renew the sources of my life with my years, so that they might be more worthy of you !"

In another collection of letters we find the following one :²

"Thank you, and I will not worry you about the shortness of your letter. It is enough for me to know that you have received

¹ Letters, p. 138.

² From a copy belonging to M. Ch. de Loménié.

mine, and that you are beginning to take walks. I wish I could write to but you see how difficult it is for me to write. He must have pity on me and forgive me.

“What can I tell you? I know nothing. I do not see anyone; politics bore me, and I do not believe in them. They seem to want to carry out all that I advised formerly with regard to England and Europe: they will not do anything, and we in railways and luck and the genius of the Ministers.

“You might have told me something about the visitors, great and small, whom you have met there. Have you not a piano strummer? There are some everywhere. Mme. de Chateaubriand thanks you. She coughs all the time, but is very well.

“I am very much interested in M. Ampère, and I like all his attention to you. Get well, that is my eternal refrain; and then there will be Napoleon’s ashes, and our great journey to Italy, and we must thank God for everything. I have rather more courage to-day, as I am dating my letter August. It seems to me that there are only a few more days before September, the happy month when I shall see you again. It is a hard time, all the time spent without you.”

On her side Mme. Récamier wrote to Ampère:

“Ems, August 10th. [1840.]¹

“I am only writing a few words to thank you for your kind letter, and to send you those I have received for you. I am awaiting the *great decision* impatiently; I was not pleased with the article in the *Journal des Débats*. . . . Princesse Belg. leaves in two days. I have scarcely seen her. I spend my time alone, and my voice is better on account of this silence. The waters, after making me ill, now give me strength, and I am continuing courageously and perseveringly. If, as I hope, I get back my health, I shall owe it to you. Tell me what has become of Eugène. I have heard nothing of him since I left. Farewell, farewell. Remember me to Mme. de Vernède. When shall we all meet again at our poor old Abbaye? Tell me about Mme. de Boigne. Is Mme. de Noailles still in Paris? If you see her, speak to her of me.

¹ M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

Take care of M. de Chat., who has a great liking and friendship for you.

"I have excellent news of M. Ballanche. I like Mme. d'Hautefeuille, who is surrounding him with such delicate attentions. I have had a charming letter from her."

During this time Ballanche, at the Comtesse d'Hautefeuille's, was occupied with the classifying of his notes, and at the same time was disturbed by the gravity of political events. "The situation is changing," he wrote to Mme. Récamier. "England is playing a very risky game, but we are playing a very poor one. I very much fear that events are approaching, the gravity of which it is not possible to doubt."¹

The Comtesse d'Hautefeuille, *née de Beaurepaire*, was the daughter of an officer in the Vendean army. She had written some works herself, which she published under the pseudonym of Anna-Marie. The best known of her writings is *L'Ame exilée*. Chateaubriand had given her in a note a certificate of talent.² With her Ballanche found something of what he missed through Mme. Récamier's departure. He was taken with a "fever for history," and wanted, as soon as his *Théodicée* was finished, to write a strictly historical work.³ "The historical sense has just come to life in me," he says at this epoch. Unfortunately, his health was bad : he lived now on milk and vegetables ; he had to take short but frequent walks, and was obliged to take care of himself in every way. Chess was his favourite diversion, and Mme. d'Hautefeuille showed a touching solicitude in trying to prevent his feeling bored. He was going in for the "*Pythagorean régime*," as he said himself,⁴ but he had found, to use his own words "a second Antigone."⁵

The kind attentions with which he was surrounded, in this retreat so favourable to his recovery, did not make him forget either his most faithful friend or J. J. Ampère, to whom the Academy of Inscriptions was about to award the Gobert

¹ Letter dated from Saint-Vrain. Unpublished letter, No. 136 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. ² *M.O.T.*, I, p. 206, note 2.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 497 and 498.

⁴ Letter of August 21st, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁵ Letter No. 133 of the collection.

prize.¹ "I am in a state difficult to explain," he wrote to Mme. Récamier on the 2nd of September. "I had brought some things here to finish, and I have not even looked at them. My health has been passable, but I have had no strength at all. The first days, more particularly, it was like an absence of life. Now everything is quite changed, and I have taken possession of life once more. Will this last? I do not doubt it, but I am being very circumspect I am very anxious now that we should all be at the Abbaye again or near the Abbaye M. de Chateaubriand seems to have decided on a sort of immovability. My dream is that he should arrange to publish his *Mémoires*. I must own that I fear he is working too much at them. I would rather that he attended to reading over his other works, not to correct them, but to free them from all incorrections which have accumulated, thanks to a series of editions left to those who have been making their profit out of them. Ampère has triumphed, you see. He has, unfortunately, just now a very sad worry, but this will soon be over. I think of nothing but this winter. Good Heavens! I dare not say how much I fear now that the Ems waters have not done all the good on which I had counted. As for myself, I have every reason to believe that my health is restored, but I shall not enjoy it really until I have returned to the fold."²

The day before the one when he was to go back to the Abbaye, the happiness of this old man of sixty-four was like that of a child. "I am both sad and joyful," he writes; "joyful at coming back to you, and sad to be uncertain about your health, sad about the situation in which I shall find Ampère, sad about the solitude in which I shall leave such perfect hosts. Mme. de Hautefeuille has watched over me like a beloved child. I have been taken up with the charm of the country, which for me is a symptom of the return of youth. Fresh ideas have come to my mind, which is another symptom of the return of youth. I thought I was entering into real winter, and I see that a few days of autumn

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 500.

² Unpublished letter, No. 131 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection. Address, Mme. Récamier.

are still in store for me. I hope you will accept these fleeting days of my autumn. Farewell, then, till to-morrow.”¹

During the winter of 1840 and 1841, the Rhône and Saône having inundated Lyons, Mme. Récamier organized a subscription *soirée* for the benefit of her fellow citizens there. Lady Byron paid a hundred francs for her ticket, and took advantage of this opportunity for paying two visits to the Abbaye. The Duc de Noailles presided over the refreshments. Chateaubriand did the honours. Rachel recited part of *Esther*. This was one of Mme. Récamier’s last successes.² M. de Marcellus, who published a commentary on certain passages of the *Mémoires d’Outre-Tombe*, and who frequently quotes Mme. Récamier, tells that he heard Rachel “the day when the illustrious tragedian, after a scene from *Polyeucte*, gave Esther’s prayer. Very much affected, but with slow movements on account of his age, M. de Chateaubriand got up on his trembling legs and, approaching the admirable actress, said to her in a feeble voice, ‘What a grief it is to see anything so beautiful come to life just as one is about to die !’ ‘But, Monsieur le Vicomte,’ replied Rachel in an animated and fervent tone, as though continuing her prayer, ‘there are men who do not die.’”³

Mme. Récamier’s old friend grew weaker day by day. Everyone had admired him when, at the reception of Comte Molé at the Academy, he had made a great effort to be there and to take his seat next the new member.⁴ According to his own expressions, his courage was not worn out, but he was “overcome by disgust.” He thought of nothing more but “to die as a Christian,” and hoped that his confessor, the “worthy Father Seguin,” would still have the strength to lift his hand in order to “whiten” him and send him to God.⁵

Chateaubriand went to Néris-les-Bains, for the sake of

¹ Unpublished letter of the 4th of September. Address, Mme. Récamier, à l’Abbaye-aux-Bois. M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection. See about Ballanche the Abbé de Féletz, *Jugements historiques et littéraires*, Paris, 1840.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 505 and following.

³ *Chateaubriand et son temps*, p. 134.

⁴ *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 309.

⁵ Letter to Hyde de Neuville, *ibid.*, p. 311.

the waters there, in 1841. Before leaving he made an effort to scrawl this short note to his friend :¹

“ Saturday, 31st.

“ A few words before leaving. Do not forget me, although I cannot write any more. I am not leaving your sun, though, and yet it seems to me as though I shall be separated from you by all the earth. Good-bye for the present. I shall not get well; I cannot get well away from you. A hundred messages to M. Ballanche. I will write from Moulins.”

The letter from Moulins, written on the 1st of August, was dictated to a secretary.² On the 6th of August from Néris, there was another very long letter, in which Chateaubriand told about his journey and gave details about the treatment.³ On the 9th of August he tried again, but in vain, to write assuring Mme. Récamier of his attachment to her.⁴ Finally on the 12th of August, he announced his departure :

“ NÉRIS, Thursday, August 12th, 1841.⁵

“ If you have received all my epistles, you will see that I have kept my word and done still more. But as I know from experience that exactitude does not mean attachment, I would not boast if I were not certain that a real sentiment is at the bottom of my great virtue. . . . I shall start back to you, either on Monday the 16th or Tuesday the 17th. Whether I stay on the way or not at M. Hyde de Neuville’s, I shall be in Paris almost at the same time as you. I have been very unwell and still am so, and have not been able to take the baths. If I am to get well I must not leave you. You see that I am always the same, although my handwriting has changed.

“ CHATEAUBRIAND.

“ If you see Mme. de Chateaubriand before I do, do not tell her what I say to you about my health.”

¹ Letters, p. 146. ² P. 147. Published in *Esquisse d’un Maître*, p. 336.

³ P. 163; *ibid.*, p. 337. ⁴ P. 149; *ibid.*, p. 343.

⁵ P. 151, unpublished. Only the signature is in Chateaubriand’s handwriting.

From afar he encouraged the "young Greeks" on their way to their country—that is to say, Ampère, Charles Lenormant, and Prosper Mérimée, who were leaving for the East. Ampère and Mérimée made a rapid journey through Asia Minor, and Jean-Jacques published an account of it in the form of a letter to Sainte-Beuve.¹

On the 25th of September, 1841,² Chateaubriand finished reading his *Mémoires*, and began to write that conclusion in which so much weariness is evident. His intelligence was quite fresh all the time, but he was anxious and worried by the gloomiest presentiments, so that he left to others the care of depicting scenes of the future.³

On the 16th of November he wrote the last lines of his great work, and they were not in any way inferior to the first ones. "I see," said the poet—for what other name is so suitable for Chateaubriand?—"the reflections of a dawn, the sunrise of which I shall not see. Nothing remains for me but to sit down at the edge of my grave, after which I shall go boldly with the crucifix in my hand to eternity."

Among those who helped to enliven Chateaubriand's last days we must mention a young man who soon after, by marrying Mlle. Lenormant, became the great-nephew of Mme. Récamier. Louis de Loménie had commenced, in 1839, the publication of his *Galerie des contemporains illustres, par un Homme de rien*. It came out in weekly parts and M. Biré has told us in some pleasant pages⁴ about the impression that these witty sketches produced. Chateaubriand was studied in them among the first, with respect but not without a certain freedom. The article pleased him and he wanted to know the author. In 1841 Louis de Loménie devoted one of his notices to Ballanche. He soon became one of the intimate friends of the Abbaye. Like Sainte-Beuve, he took note of what he heard and the most delicate

¹ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 302 and following. Compare Chateaubriand's letter to Ampère, September 2nd, 1841, *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 108, and Mérimée's letter to Fr. de Saucy, December 1st, 1841 (*Nouv. Revue* of September 15th, 1882, p. 238 and following).

² *M.O.T.*, VI, p. 443.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 479.

⁴ *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 297 and following.

confidences were made to him. The following fragment written in 1841 is a proof of this:¹

"After the reading, Mme. Récamier invited me to stay to dinner with the two inseparables, Father David and Father Ballanche. After dinner the two old men left, and our *tête-à-tête* commenced. She told me stories. We talked about the famous love affair of the Prince of Prussia, the stay at Coppet, the promise of marriage, the letter to M. Récamier asking him to consent to the divorce, M. Récamier's reply, the Prince's fury on seeing that she refused to break off violently. She had a charming woman's way of making a difficult confession. During the fortnight's love affair at Coppet they used to boat; the Prince rowed, and was delighted all the time. 'Persuaded as I was,' she said, 'that we were going to marry each other, our intercourse was of a very intimate kind, but,' she added, 'I must tell you that there was something wanting in it. The memories of that fortnight and of the first two years of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, the time of my love affair with M. de Chateaubriand, are the most beautiful, the only beautiful ones of my life. M. de Chateaubriand,' she said to me, 'has a great deal of nobility of character, immense self-respect, very great delicacy; he is ready to make the greatest sacrifices for persons he loves. But he has not a shade of veritable sensibility. He has caused me great suffering more than once.'"

Thus we see that Mme. Récamier did not delude herself with regard to Chateaubriand's character. She did not give up for him the memories to which she had remained the most faithful, but because he had loved her, or rather, because she had really been in love with him for two years, she forgave him all the rest. She found in the charm which that emotion had left her enough pleasure to enable her not to complain of a melancholy, and at times very unhappy, existence.

¹ M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE LAST OF THE ABBAYE RECEPTIONS (1842-1845)

Ballanche received at the French Academy.—Chateaubriand returns to Néris for the waters (summer of 1842).—Mme. Récamier at Saint-James and at Maintenon.—Letters from Ballanche.—Chateaubriand at Bourbone-les-Bains (summer 1843); his visit to Chambord (September); his journey in England.—Death of Augustus of Prussia (July, 1843).—Chateaubriand publishes the *Vie de Rancé* (May, 1844); a letter from Lamennais; Sainte-Beuve's attitude.—Chateaubriand's last letters; his journey to Venice (June, 1845).—The polemic between Sainte-Beuve and Louis de Loménie about Benjamin Constant.—The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

IN 1842, a little satirical dictionary of contemporary celebrities appeared in Paris. The author, who signed himself "Fortunatus," claimed to have been compelled, in order not to "fail in his duty to his mind and his heart," to emerge from the common pagan herd in order to judge the Manitous and the Fetishes. He said, referring to Ballanche: "Quite recently this profound old man, already so antique, was embalmed; little bands were tied round him and he was placed in a niche at the Academy, with this label: 'Ballanche—Logograph.' And yet the shades of La Fontaine and of Fénelon smiled upon him." The Vicomte de Chateaubriand was treated in this dictionary as "a fine chivalrous genius," but, at the end of a flattering portrait, Fortunatus added the following phrases: "For the last twenty years he has been talking to us about the neighbourhood of his tomb. . . . It is therefore quite time to publish a last edition of his complete works, with this epigraph, *Quotidie morior.*" The notice

about Mme. Récamier¹ was short and spiteful. She was defined as follows: "The Ninon de Lenclos of the nineteenth century, plus virtue!"

There was perhaps a certain unfitness in thus attacking with these epigrams three old persons who were all infirm. Thanks to the care of the celebrated Lerebours, Mme. Récamier was able to see again now.² As to Chateaubriand, Vigny, who came to see him in May 1842, when paying his academic visits, was struck with "his infirm attitude. He was perched on a writing chair of the usual height, and his feet did not touch the ground, but hung down four inches from it." Whilst talking he held his paralyzed right arm with his left hand and twisted about painfully in his chair. He declared that he was quite ready to disappear from the scene when he had paid a few debts of friendship—when, for instance, he had given his vote at the Academy for his 'poor Ballanche,' whom he had known 'for sixty years.'³

Ballanche presented himself as a candidate for the Academy in 1842, on the death of Alexandre Duval, and was elected.⁴ As early as 1840 he had been invited to send in his name as a candidate, but he did not want to stand in the way of Victor Hugo, to whom he considered this honour then due. It was on this occasion that he wrote Mme. Récamier the fine letter which J. J. Ampère has published, after abbreviating it slightly.⁵

"For the last ten years," he declares, "I have done nothing fresh which should entitle me to the votes of the Academy, as my last publication was in 1830. I am perfectly aware that if the Academy is thinking about me at all now, it is solely to oppose me to Victor Hugo. If it were not for this motive, it is quite certain that I should have a very poor chance. I cannot accept such a situation, and I beseech my friends not to impose it on me. It is impossible to leave Victor Hugo outside the Academy, and the best thing for the

¹ See also the articles Louise Collet, Delécluze, Desbordes-Valmore, Sainte-Beuve, de Tocqueville.

² According to a letter from Ballanche to Mme. Lenormant (letters to different persons in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection).

³ A. de Vigny, *Journal d'un poète*, p. 189 and following.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 514.

⁵ *Ballanche*, p. 233.

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Academy to do, is to overcome its susceptibilities. This does not mean to say that I intend to present myself after Victor Hugo. It is all over for me. I am sixty-three years of age, and there is only one thing left for me to do—that is, to give a definitive form to my ideas, and then to be silent. When my last publication is finished I shall only live from thenceforth for my friends. My career will be completely closed. If I had to give any advice to the Academy, it would be to see who there is in the old generation, and to hasten to adopt those it finds there. Now, of this old generation, of whom I am the senior member, there are only M. de Béranger, M. de Lamennais, and M. Alfred de Vigny left. Only the last-mentioned, I believe, is a candidate. I should not advise M. de Vigny to present himself before M. Hugo has entered, but he ought to be admitted directly afterwards, in my opinion. Then comes the new generation! Ampère, Sainte-Beuve. After that the door should open to another series, commencing with Alexandre Dumas.¹ This is my opinion."

No letter could be more honourable for Ballanche. Like Chateaubriand, but more good-naturedly, he was interested in everything new. He followed political events with great curiosity. In October, 1840, when Thiers gave in his resignation, the King appointed Guizot to the Ministry.

" You are quite right," Ballanche wrote to Mme. Lenormant,² " in not believing in a conflagration. The papers are doing their utmost to alarm us, but they do not succeed, because there is nothing in it.

" Anyhow, tell M. Guizot this. As long as the Government was obliged to defend itself, it could not be responsible for its acts. It was obliged to secure its existence first. Now that its existence is secured, responsibility commences for it. The turn of legal Opposition, of Opposition in the interior even of the institution—that is, of Opposition in the progressive sense, of a friendly and unsubversive Opposition—the turn of that Opposition has come. It is for the Government

¹ Ampère has omitted this last phrase. The original is in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Letters to different persons, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

to listen to it, to profit by it, to anticipate it when it can. The Government ought to take advantage of its liberty to make society move on, for society cannot remain stationary.

"We dine every day at Mme. Récamier's, the Duc de Noailles, Ampère, and I. M. de Chateaubriand comes from time to time to dine with us. We pay a little visit to Mme. Récamier in the morning, and we spend the evening with her. Sometimes during the day she goes out with M. de Chateaubriand, and we are occasionally allowed to accompany them."

The worthy old Ballanche contented himself with very little. A Freemasons' lodge had been established according to principles taken from his works, and he was delighted about this.¹ He was considered abroad as one of the chiefs of Catholic philosophy in France.² He was spending what little money he had left in experiments with mechanical inventions. He wanted to introduce a new motive power into industry.³ He was happy about his election to the Academy, but not at all over-excited.⁴ It was Mignet who read his reception speech. Chateaubriand appeared that day for the last time at a public meeting. Towards this epoch Alfred de Vigny notes in his *Journal*:⁵ "To-day the worthy Ballanche told me that his vote would be for me when he had a right to vote. He talked to me very tranquilly and pleasantly. The straightforward, good old man seems satisfied and happy. In a drawing-room," he said, "out of every forty men everyone chooses his own. I shall do the same and you, too, at the Academy ; we shall choose our own."

Chateaubriand returned to Néris for the waters in 1842. When Mme. Récamier was at Saint-James, or at Maintenon, she continued to receive letters from him. Mme. Lenormant says that she only quotes a few of these letters, because of their "sad" tone.⁶ They are, however, well worth reading, and we are giving some fresh extracts by way of completing the text already published.

¹ From a letter to Mme. R. (letters to different persons).

² See *Choix de Mém. de la Soc. litt. de l'Univ. cathol.*, II, p. 107, Louvain, 1842. ³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 417.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 514. See De Molènes, *Chronique de l'Académie*, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1842. ⁵ P. 195. ⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 512.

"Sunday, 17th."

"I am just starting, and I am trying to scribble a few lines with my own hand to tell you all that I feel in leaving. I will write from Néris. A thousand kind regards to the companions of your solitude."

The letter of July 20th, although a long one, is in his own handwriting.² The letter of the 26th is also written by M. de Chateaubriand.

"Your handwriting," he says, "produces the same effect on me as a ray of sunshine. Here are a few words written by your own hand, which shine for me through the mists of Néris, where I fancy I see everywhere the ghost of Agrippina's son. I am continuing the treatment. At times I think it is doing me good, and then I begin to suffer again. I go to the baths with one of those English Majors, such as one meets at all watering-places. He screams out when they put him in the water; then we talk in English, and that consoles him It seems to me that Thiers is continuing his rope dances: the Left is his confederate, the Right his dupe, and M. Guizot receives the price of the places in his hat."

The letters which follow are in Hyacinthe's handwriting. Chateaubriand was invited by Mme. Récamier and her hosts to go to Maintenon.³

"I have written to Mme. de Chateaubriand," he replies on the 2nd of August,⁴ "to sound her about this little journey. I shall await her answer before replying. She is so ill that I am hurrying back to go and nurse her in her Rue du Bac.

¹ Autograph letter, p. 152.

² P. 153. *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 512. Text slightly inexact.

³ The Duc de Noailles to Mme. Récamier: "Maintenon, July 19th, 1845. I am not without some impatience, Madame, to have news of you, of the portrait, and news about your arrival here. The swallows are awaiting M. de Chateaubriand, or rather they are calling him every day, perched on the casement of his turret window. . . . As for M. de Chateaubriand, he must not trouble about breakfasting with us every day, if that is inconvenient to him. He can breakfast in his room and you in your room if that should suit you better. There will be a little low carriage at his door every day, so that he can go where he likes and also choose the persons whom he wishes to accompany him. He can go to the Abbaye at three o'clock, and every evening can go to bed at nine." Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ *Letters*, p. 160.

I am ashamed to do anything for my old bones whilst she is suffering. I blush to be troubling about a pair of legs as worn out as the decrepit ideas which are rambling about like lamentable rats in my brain.”¹

The following day he overcomes his sufferings enough to send a few lines : “The weather is bad ; it is cold, and I am in a damp room on the ground floor. You see what comes of leaving you. I shall not be caught doing that again. I got up for a short time ; I have dictated this little note to Hyacinthe, and am going to bed again. I received your letter this very morning from Paris. You are the best of women : you think of my woes, of poor Ballanche’s and of M. Ampère’s regrets. A word from you, therefore, is my delight.”²

The baths tired Chateaubriand very much, so that he could no longer write, but dictated his letters to Hyacinthe. He had not lost his taste, though, for clever irony. “Everything,” he says to Juliette, “is about to take place in the Chambers in holy silence.”³ You will perhaps go and see the funeral ceremony, and then all will be over from Louis XVI to the Duc d’Orléans, with Bonaparte on the way. I am coming to the same conclusion as the Duke of Wellington when speaking to me of Fouché’s peccadilloes—that it is all frivolity.” He then adds himself, “I have kept a few extra words of affection for my own hand to write.”⁴

Mme. Récamier was very unwell all the time. Her health had become “detestable,”⁵ in spite of the care of the Duc and Duchesse de Noailles and in spite of Brifaut’s loving watchfulness. Brifaut was a mediocre poet, but an agreeable man, who amused the rest of the guests by the somewhat naïve pride that he felt in living among duchesses in this royal castle haunted by the memories of Louis XIV and Mme. de Maintenon.

¹ Chateaubriand adds a few lines with his own hand.

² *Letters*, p. 162. Chateaubriand signs the first two letters with his name.

³ *Letters*, p. 159. Letter of August 1st.

⁴ The letter, p. 168. *Esquisse d’un Maître*, p. 345, should also be read ; letter, p. 170 ; *ibid.*, 346 ; letter, p. 171 ; *ibid.*, p. 347.

⁵ See her letter to Mme. Lenormant in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 167 and following. This letter was published a second time in *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 212 and following. See too Sainte-Beuve. *Causeries du Lundi*, XV, p. 323, note 1, édit. Garnier.

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Ballanche had returned to Mme. de Hautefeuille's. He felt separated from everyone there, and it seemed as though he had no life when so far away from his friend. "I am rather like the poor rich man with Lazarus," he said, "asking for a drop of water to cool his tongue."¹ As he saw his end drawing nearer, separations seemed to him all the more painful.

"Decidedly," he said in his letter of August 13th, "our colony is increasing. M. Brifaut has come into it. M. and Mme. d'Hautefeuille are becoming more and more identified with it. This means more delight and more pleasure, but we must look at things as they will inevitably be, and there are complications to be anticipated. All the fuss that preceded the departures did not add anything to the complications, but it served to emphasize them more. We will talk that all over when we meet again. I was so confused and in such grief at the last moment, that I brought nothing with me. If I had not come away in such complete destitution I should have been able to work a little. I do not regret the work in itself, but I must own that I should rather have liked a true pretext for withdrawing to my own room."²

Mme. Récamier was expected at Saint-Vrain, where she had promised to spend a few days. Ballanche was simply living for this, and was arranging all the details for her visit. "You will have a very little house all to yourself. There will only be just the necessary things, just as in a nun's cell. Your maids will not be in the next room, but underneath, so that they can hear your bell immediately. This little house is completely surrounded with flowers, which are a trifle limp just now on account of the excessive heat. You will no longer find grassy lawns, but I do not fancy these are to be seen anywhere, probably not even at Maintenon, where there is such a beautiful river."³

In the third volume of his *Galerie des contemporains illustres* M. de Loménié gave a portrait of Ballanche. The philosopher

¹ Unpublished letter of August 9th, 1842, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

² Unpublished letter. Address, Mme. Récamier, Chateau de Maintenon, Eure-et-Loir.

³ Unpublished letter of August 17th, 1842, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

waited until he had a few days' quiet before reading it, and he thought it charming. One single detail grated on him, and that was the epithet *odd* given to the episode that a certain M. Guillemon, at Ballanche's own request, had put between *Antigone* and *L'Homme sans nom*, but all the same he was very much touched by the portrait as a whole.¹

Chateaubriand had put in an appearance at Mme. d'Hautefeuille's, and had then left again quickly out of consideration for Mme. de Chateaubriand, who did not like his absence at all. Ballanche said in a melancholy way: "As a matter of fact, we ought not to leave each other any more, for separations always cause trouble. I wish, though, that this family in which I am now living could be included in our future plans. It seems to me that it would suit us more than M. Brifaut does. I appreciate all his attractive qualities, but he is newer."²

On the 3rd of September, 1842, Ballanche wrote again to Mme. Lenormant:³ "M. de Chateaubriand is well," he says, "although he is not yet persuaded about the success of the waters. Mme. de Chateaubriand is very unwell. M. Brifaut is about to recommence his rounds, and will get back at the beginning of October. You know that he is gravitating more and more towards the centre of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Ampère is going to pay a little visit to Vanteuil, then he will go to Tocqueville. You have no doubt heard that he has lost his poor sister. That death, alas, was unfortunately a deliverance."

At the end of the year 1842, Ampère was elected to the Academy of Inscriptions in the place of Degérando.⁴ From time to time a few small events happened to vary the somewhat monotonous life at the Abbaye. Mme. Récamier always intervened in order to maintain peace and harmony.

On the 15th of June, 1842, Sainte-Beuve published a study of Mme. de Rémusat in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. There was a charming page in it signed by Chateaubriand and dated 1813. It had been taken from Mme. de Rémusat's

¹ Unpublished letter of August 17th, 1842, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Unpublished letter of August 20th, 1842, in M. Ch. de Loménie's papers.

³ Letters to various persons, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁴ *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 126. *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 306.

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album. This was the occasion of a little incident. "M. de Chateaubriand," says Sainte-Beuve, "was annoyed at thus being surprised in friendly intercourse and in the good graces of a person belonging to those Imperial or *doctrinaire* people, with whom he had ever since been constantly on cool terms, and who were even repugnant to him. He told Mme. Récamier that he had never written anything in Mme. de Rémusat's album, and that the *fragment* was not by him. Mme. Récamier at once let me know this: the truth for this charming woman was never anything but what her friends wished. There was nothing much to answer in reply to M. de Chateaubriand's disavowal, and I merely remarked that the *fragment* was written and signed by his own hand in the book from which I copied it."¹

This time, though, Sainte-Beuve bore no malice. When writing his study on the Comte de Ségur in May, 1843, he put in a delicate phrase with regard to Mme. Récamier.² And in February, when giving his friend Collombet the literary news, he said: "There is nothing very good here. The poetical stars are continuing their eclipses or paraboles. Lamartine is indulging in them. Hugo is preparing a drama. De Vigny is writing some far-fetched poems, so-called philosophical. We are all of us at the third decoction of the coffee. Chateaubriand, who is writing a life of the Abbé de Rancé, is still the first and the last."³ Quinet had not given up frequenting the Abbaye. In February, 1843, he introduced his dear Minna to Mme. Récamier.⁴ He saw Chateaubriand again, but he found him "more and more dignified," and he reproached him with "putting on the cowl" when writing the life of Rancé, "in order to get the tone of the Catholic reaction." Charles Lenormant had thrown himself into this reactionary movement; his conversion dates from about this time.⁵

Some of the sentiments and thoughts of Mme. Récamier

¹ *Portr. de femmes*, p. 474, note 1. See Latreille, *Sainte-Beuve et Chateaubriand*, p. 387. Sainte-Beuve has kept the *fragment* in *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, pp. 97-98.

² See *Portr. litt.*, II, édit Garnier, p. 333.

³ *Lettres à Collombet*, p. 220.

⁴ *Lettres à sa mère*, II, pp. 303, 321, 385.

⁵ See the notice by Wallon, p. 41 and following; Ozanam, *Lettres*, II, pp. 38, 49, 86, 100, 244.

can be found in Ballanche's letters. On the 4th of May he wrote as follows to Paul David :¹

"Our dinner with only us two is a trifle dull, as Mme. Récamier cannot talk, and I am getting hard of hearing. On returning home I felt a slight . . . of the stomach. Believe me, my dear friend, my incapacity in everything is more and more evident. I have felt this for a long time at the Academy ; I am a veritable cipher there. You know what an objection I had to presenting myself as a candidate this last time. You see that I was quite right. I shall go to the public meeting of the five Academies to-day. This evening I am going to the Athénée. This meeting is to be devoted to my ideas on Roman history, on the occasion of M. Ponsard's tragedy. I am convinced that the tragedy would have gained in originality if he had known my hypotheses, which in my opinion are not hypotheses. In my system the expulsion of the Tarquins was a revolution of defence on the part of the Optimates. At the same moment all the small states of the Campagna accomplished the extermination of the Optimates. . . . I am not in a fit state to be able to go back to this line opened out by me in 1825, in Rome. I shall not even be in a state to offer any explanations at the meeting this evening. I shall go to it, nevertheless.

"M. de Chateaubriand will not leave for La Trappe before the 1st of June. His health is perfect, and Mme. de Chateaubriand is better too."

On the 27th May, 1843, there is another letter from Ballanche to Paul David :

"M. de Chateaubriand intends going to the Pyrenees, and in the meantime he goes from time to time to the Néothermes. Ampère intends travelling during the holidays. The quarrel between the University and the ardent Catholics has been very bitter the last few days, but it seems to be calming down. As always, both sides are to blame. But there is no doubt about it, the question will go on ripening. There must be a solution sooner or later, or a compromise with regard to the freedom of education.

"For the last few days M. Ponsard has been very much to the

¹ Letters to various persons, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

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fore, but at present he is more in the background again. I wanted to see *Lucrèce*. There is no doubt but that it is an attempt, more or less happy, but sure, towards moralizing the theatre. I can say as much for *Mlle. de Lavallière*, which I went to see at Porte Saint-Martin. M. Ponsard and M. Adolphe Dumas are men who are poets and who respect public morality. We have therefore just made a step forwards in the direction of the moral regeneration of the theatre. We must be content with two things which are a beginning of two great things: first, a very real religious movement, and secondly, a public ready to welcome efforts in the direction of morality.”¹

In 1843, Chateaubriand once more wended his way towards a watering-place, but this time to Bourbonne-les-Bains in the department of the Haute-Marne. His farewell was written with a very trembling hand, and is extremely difficult to read. It must have been an effort for Juliette’s eyes at that time to decipher the affectionate scrawl:

“ Tuesday the 27th.²

“I am trying to wish you good-bye. It costs me a great deal. I shall write from Bourbonne and shall return quickly from this journey, which I am taking against my inclination. If I never come back, do not ever forget me. I am taking with me my memories of you, my sole fortune.” [The last phrase is incomprehensible.]³

“ BOURBONNE, July 5th.

“ You are admirable a thousand times over. Take advantage of the beautiful weather for getting back your health. Go anywhere, just wherever you like. I shall not mind. Every evening I talk of you to the larks, and they give me news of you. I hope to see you again between the 20th and 30th of this month. We will then make our plans about Venice. I will not go on dictating, for I am inclined to get sentimental. Continue your kind pity for me. I am

¹ Letters to various persons, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

² The letter No. 173 of June 30th, in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 518, is an autograph one.

³ P. 174, autograph letter. See letter, p. 175, of July 1st, in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 519, that of July 2nd afterwards, letter, p. 176, of July 4th, in *Esquisse d’un Maître*, p. 348.

only afraid, though, that you tire yourself too much by writing to me. The baths which I continue taking from a sense of duty made me suffer a great deal to commence with, but now they do not affect me in that way. You are my veritable doctor. [In Chateaubriand's own writing.] A word written by me will thank you still more. Do not imagine that I have changed as my handwriting has.”¹

“BOURBONNE-LES-BAINS,
“July 9th.²

“I am obliged to be less brave than you, and dictate this letter to be written by my young man. This distresses me, for it seems to announce the nearness of a great separation. You do well to go about and to see all that you can. I foresaw that the great lady had not desirable surroundings when she introduced the very little girl to you; there was something too animal in it. Mme. Pastoret has her old age for company. That is very good society when it is not too dull. I am delighted that the Duc de Noailles is coming back. That will be another friend for you. I have been better the last few days, but the rain has now pulled me down again. Venice will just suit us. But shall we go there? I doubt it, with my sufferings and with Mme. de Chateaubriand's ideas, as she is arranging for staying in Paris. What does it matter, if I am with you? Farewell for to-day. I cannot mount my hill to go and visit my larks, and I miss them. Everything is leaving me except the memory of you, which is with me everywhere.”³

“BOURBONNE, July 22nd.⁴

“I see that you do not care much about my handwriting, as you do not thank me for it. It was, as a matter of fact, an

¹ P. 177. Unpublished. See the letter, p. 178, of July 6th, in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 521. ² P. 180. Unpublished.

³ Chateaubriand signed this letter. The dates of all these are confirmed by the post-marks. The letter of July 12th, p. 181, in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 523; the letter of July 14th in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 524 (p. 183 of the original collection), in which it is given as part of the letter of July 16th (p. 185), which is abridged. This last letter is quoted in full in *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 349, but is dated by mistake July 10th. The letter of July 18th (p. 187) is unpublished. The autograph letter of July 19th (p. 189) without the postscript in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 526. ⁴ P. 190. Unpublished.

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unreadable scrawl, and in order to be more intelligible I prefer making use of my secretary's pen. . . . I know persons who have no palace, and who endure their poverty patiently. Those sybarites at the Chamber of Peers are complaining of a rose-leaf. Instead of pitying themselves, they ought rather to think of all the suffering their meanness causes. Now my worst anger is over. . . . There are a good number of people from Philippe's palace here whom I do not see. I met one yesterday strolling along in noble style, followed at a short distance by a lackey. How I regret Molière!"¹

In September, 1843, Chateaubriand went to visit Chambord. He returned enchanted, but very sad, too, and fatigued.² "I have come back," he wrote to Mme. Récamier, who was at Saint-Eloi, "delighted and amazed with Chambord. Anyone who has not seen it knows nothing of the genius of François I. It is Raphael applied to the genius of the Gauls. I am back here waiting for you, and I shall only begin to live again when you are here. Do not come, though, until the time you

¹ The letter of July 24th, p. 192, which is unimportant or has not been published; the letter of July 26th, p. 194, the same. The letter written from Bourbone to Ampère on July 17th, 1843, is published in *Corr. et Sour. des Ampères*, II, pp. 128-129. In M. Ch. de Loménie's collection a copy exists which gives the following text, very different from the text that has been published: "You flatter me, Monsieur; fortunately you only speak of my early years, about which I no longer trouble. There is a very great distance of time between the days of the *Martyrs* and those of my decrepitude. I was writing alone then, and had no need to interpose anyone else's hand between myself and my friends. I wrote to Mme. Récamier that the visit of the collegians had had its sequel. They all arrived with their masters, and made music enough to send people deaf. Unfortunately, my French ear is hard. I am sorry about what you say with regard to Mme. Récamier. She took what I told her about the baths much too seriously. They upset me a little at the time, but I think they will really do me a great deal of good. We shall see this good during the autumn. I should like, if possible, not to be obliged to drag myself about as I had to before my friends. I was ashamed of the pain I caused them. I hope to start soon for China with you. We will take Mme. Récamier and the mandarin of letters, the great Ballanche. I must ask your permission to be less respectful than you, and to send you my heartiest greetings. Old people are like that; they do not see that their fraternal salutations are very little cared for."

"I am going up on to my hills to see the larks again, with whom I am very friendly. I want to compliment them on this beautiful Italian morning we have to-day. [In M. de Chateaubriand's own writing.] I want to prove to you that I can still sign, and do not have to make just a cross.—CHATEAUBRIAND."

² Letter, p. 200. *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 351.

had intended. Do not change any of your plans, and reckon my life as nothing ; it is yours for ever.”¹

On the 24th of September he thanks Juliette for a short letter he has received from her. “Thank God,” he adds, “I hope that we shall meet again, although I am suffering more than ever. I cannot walk now at all, and still less write, so to say. My head keeps all right, and my heart is as it should be. Good-bye, then, until the end of this week, which finishes the month. Yours, ever yours.”²

“October 4th.

“I must worry you on St. François’ Day, since you have not come back for it. I begin a fresh lease with you to-day, which will only end with my life. Is it not to-morrow morning that you are coming to pay a visit to Paris ? I will go and find out at the Abbaye. I have heard nothing about anyone, and do not know what has become of people.”³

Towards the end of September, 1843, the Comte de Chambord wrote to Chateaubriand expressing his desire to see him in England,⁴ where he was just going himself. “Your presence with me will be very useful,” he says, “and will explain the object of my journey better than anything.” Won over by this skilful flattery, and sensitive to the temptation of one last rôle to play, Chateaubriand set out for this sea voyage.

Nothing could be more sad and touching than to see this old man of seventy-five, pitiless to himself, ready to sacrifice the repose, which he now needed so much, to his loyalty as a monarchist. This time his letters to Mme. Récamier did not in the least resemble the grand missives from the London Embassy. There was no longer that authority of idea and that strength of hand which gave such dignity to those other documents. At present, if Chateaubriand wrote himself, it was evident that his pen was shaky, for the letters were uncertain. We will endeavour to give some of the most touching passages which have not hitherto been published of this correspondence.

¹ P. 197. Dictated letter with autograph signature, dated September 22nd.

² P. 201. Dictated ; signature badly written.

³ P. 199. ⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 527.

“Sunday morning.”¹

“Come now, a word of farewell. It will not be for long. I must see you again. I am not making my will. I have only a line to put to it, though, and you know what that is. This evening I shall write to you from Beauvais. I am going back to clouds and souvenirs. That is my usual nourishment.”

“Sunday evening, 19th.²

“I am now at Beauvais, and very well. I shall start tomorrow for Boulogne. What misery to keep leaving you! Good-bye for the present.”³

A line from Henriette Guizot to Mme. Récamier informed her of Chateaubriand’s arrival at Calais. As soon as Guizot had the news by telegram he was thoughtful enough to let Juliette know. Chateaubriand himself dictated a rather long letter on the 24th of November.⁴ He had received a letter from the young Prince, who seemed inclined to listen to the advice of the old royalist.

“London, November 25th, 1843.⁵

“You see that I do not forget you. You have a line from me every day. I have not yet seen the Prince, as he does not arrive until Monday. As soon as I have seen him I shall start for Paris, and you will see what a pleasure it will be for me to be with you again. All the papers are dead here, and not very curious to know what is happening on the Continent. We only know that you are alive by the Paris papers, which are very rare, too, in London, and they do not trouble to translate them here. ‘Paris and London are two foreign worlds, which do not know each other. Anyhow, I have done what it was my duty to do, and I shall return to you without being undeceived about anything, for the simple reason that I never believed in anything. At the end of next week I start back to you. London is just as I saw it before: it has

¹ P. 204. Autograph letter.

² P. 205. Autograph letter; post-mark, Beauvais, November 19th, 1843.

³ Letter, p. 206 of No. 22 in *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 529. Letter, p. 207 of No. 21, *ibid.*, p. 529. The first one only is an autograph letter.

⁴ P. 211. *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 530.

⁵ P. 212.

always the sadness and dulness of eternity, but formerly I moved about in this motionless eternity, and I heard a few drops of water falling there. Good-bye for the present.

“Yours for ever,

“CHATEAUBRIAND.

“I am going this morning to stay with the Prince. The address is 35, Belgrave Square.”¹

“LONDON, November 30th, 1843.²

“I have just received your letter of the 27th. You are ill, and I am distressed about it. You see how faithful I am in writing, so that you will not complain of that any more. I wrote yesterday telling all my good luck. I made an attempt to arrange about leaving, but this idea was so unfavourably received that I am obliged to postpone my departure for a week. I hope to have better news from you to-morrow. As for me, I do not lose sight of you, as you see. I must leave you now. Always our friends (*sic*).

“CHATEAUBRIAND.”³

Mme. Récamier was not on such good terms as formerly with Mme. de Chateaubriand, according to a few allusions in the letters from Bourbonne.⁴ She did not care about society now, and complained of not seeing any women whom she liked.⁵ Her weary writing testifies to her discouragement and feeble health. She had just lost another of her friends, and her dearest memories had once more been awakened by this.

Prince Augustus of Prussia, who had not been corresponding with Mme. Récamier since 1837, wrote two letters to her in 1843. “Neither time nor distance,” he said to her, “have been able to weaken the friendship which binds me to you by the most beautiful memories of my life.”⁶ In April, the same

¹ Letter of November 26th, p. 213, in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 532; letter of 28th, p. 215, *ibid.*, p. 533; letter of the 29th, p. 217, *ibid.*, p. 534.

² P. 221. Dictated letter.

³ Autograph signature. Letter, p. 222, undated, in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 537. To this should be added the unpublished notes on pp. 223, 224, 225.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 523.

⁶ Letter of February 23rd, 1843.

⁵ *Ibid.*, II, p. 526.

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year, he sent her a bracelet and spoke to her of Professor Ranke, who was just going to Paris. "He is one of the most distinguished historians of Germany, well known through his *History of the Popes* during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the *History of the Reformation*, works based on deep research and written with a great deal of impartiality and intelligence. . . . The object of his journey is to make researches in the archives and libraries of Paris, and he would be very happy if you would allow him to call on you."¹

Augustus of Prussia died a short time after this. He was exercising punctiliously his functions as Grand Master of the Artillery. On his way back from inspecting the troops in East Prussia, he was obliged to halt in the little town of Bromberg, where he had an attack of apoplexy which proved fatal. This was in the month of July. Alexander von Humboldt undertook to announce the news to Mme. Récamier.

"The loss of Prince Augustus, the last nephew of Frederick the Great, has caused general sorrow," he wrote. "He had great elevation and nobility of character. He was often misunderstood, like all those who are in high positions. He was adored by his children, and fulfilled scrupulously his duties as a father. His private life was troubled by having allowed himself to be entangled in bonds from which he would have liked to escape. Your name, Madame, that of your illustrious friend, Mme. de Staél, and the glory of M. de Chateaubriand were ever present to his memory."²

There was a special clause devoted to Mme. Récamier in the will of Prince Augustus of Prussia. "The Prince orders," writes Humboldt to Mme. Lenormant,³ "that a good copy of his portrait by Gérard shall be offered to Mme. Récamier as a keepsake and homage, and besides this two bronze groups which he prized more than any others, and which were in his study. He orders that the large picture of her painted by

¹ Unpublished letter of April 21st, 1843, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

² Letter of July 21st, 1843. M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

³ Letter of September 2nd, 1843. Unpublished letter. M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

Gérard shall be sent back to her, and also a small picture (medallion) which will be found in a cupboard, and which also represents this lady and bears the inscription *Exile*."

Humboldt was on very friendly terms with Mme. Récamier. He kept her posted about his great works. "I have the courage," he wrote her in his letter of July 21st, 1843, "after having finished a tiresome Siberian work, to commence the description of the 'whole world.' Christopher Columbus wrote to Queen Isabella that 'the world was small,' *e poca cosa*. In spite of this smallness I cannot help fearing lest I shall not finish the *Kosmos*."¹

Everything combined to warn Mme. Récamier that her life was from henceforth over.

It was all in vain, she was present to witness her own glory. In 1844, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Doudeauville, in his *Esquisses et portraits*,² praised her intelligence and her mind and, whilst reproaching her gently with her "exaggerated desire for successes" during a whole period of her life, and speaking in a bantering tone of the complacency with which for a long time she had accepted everyone's homage, the biographer extolled the serious qualities of Juliette and her beneficent rôle. The portrait is agreeable, for it is delicately shaded. The same hand which was to pencil so clever a sketch of Chateaubriand,³ depicts here the shades of Juliette's character, her intelligence, "profound under frivolous appearances," the ease with which she let herself be persuaded by sentiment rather than convinced by reason. Sometimes the stroke of the pencil is cruel: "A perfect memory may make her appear better informed than she gave herself the trouble to be."⁴ But taken altogether, the portrait is flattering: it shows up the shrewd common sense of Juliette, her tactful amiability, her kindness, and her true-heartedness. He finishes by a wise reflection: "It is alarming to think of

¹ Other letters from Alex. v. Humboldt to Mme. R. are indicated in the *C.L.A.R.*, Nos. 61 and 62.

² Vol. II, p. 63 and following. In this sketch the author writes of M. Récamier: "Everyone says that he was only a father to her" (p. 68). The import of this statement will be seen.

³ Vol. III, p. 34 and following. More particularly: "Chateaubriand says he is dead in order that his resurrection may have more splendour."

⁴ P. 70.

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what she might have been if the purity of her soul had not been greater still than the corruption of her epoch.”¹

Louise Colet published in 1844 her *Poésies complètes*, in which she gave nearly all the verses she had composed up to that date,² and this woman, who was naturally aggressive, who had not been softened by success at the Academy competitions (as Alphonse Karr realized), found some amiable stanzas in which to celebrate Mme. Récamier’s kindness. The piece which she dedicates to her is not very remarkable, as may be judged by the following quotation from it :

“ Vous êtes la double puissance
Qui captive l’humanité,
Le charme de l’intelligence
Et le charme de la beauté.
Vers vous, tous les êtres d’élite
Tous les grands coeurs sont attirés ;
Votre trône idéal abrite
Les talents que vous inspirez.”³

These verses remind one rather too much of the sonnet by Oronte, *Vous êtes de la complaisance*, but they show us that Mme. Louise Colet was, about this epoch, on somewhat intimate terms with Mme. Récamier, and the advantage she wanted to get out of this is well known.

Chateaubriand was ill and paralyzed by gout.⁴ His political career was over ; he wanted to add one more title to his literary glory by publishing the *Vie de Rancé*. The work appeared in May, 1844. The author was then seventy-five years of age, and Lamennais wrote him a letter on this occasion which is really very fine :

“ MY ILLUSTRIOUS FRIEND,

“ I have just finished reading the *Vie de Rancé*, which I could not get any earlier. I hasten to thank you for your remembrance of me, and for all the pleasure this work has given me. It is not only the history of a man, it is the painting of a century, of a great and brilliant society such as

¹ *Esquisses et portraits*, p. 72.

² About the intercourse of L. Colet and Mme. R. see *Gazette anecdotique*, 1876. In 1844 the Duc d’Abrantès published his pamphlet, *Le Salon de Mme. Récamier*, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ln²⁷, 17099.

³ P. 289 of the Gosselin edition.

⁴ Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 358 and following.

will not appear again. It is true that in place of this we have the austerity of the Exchange, and the wisdom, patriotism, and eloquence of our Deputies, without counting the cells which their philanthropy is preparing for us, in order that we may do penitence there and reform ourselves according to the incomparable example of their great virtues.

“Among so many things that one would like to remember, you have some delightful pages, full of freshness and grace, that one reads and reads again, and which appear more beautiful still each time. Why tell us that they are the last ones? Genius does not grow old. Continue to enchant both us and those who will come after us. There are autumn songs just as there are spring songs, and the former are not any the less touching nor any the less melodious.

“Respect, devotion, and admiration,

“May 18th, 1844.

F. LAMENNAIS.”¹

Chateaubriand was very much touched by this letter. “I should like to see you made Pope,” he wrote to Lamennais, “and if you would allow me I would work to make you Cardinal. Say just a word and I will start for Rome, and not come back until I have your hat.”²

Sainte-Beuve was much less enthusiastic. He had already changed very much with regard to Chateaubriand since the time when Auguste Barbier met him in the Rue des Saints-Pères, so deeply moved by the *Mémoires* of the old Breton.³ In the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of May 15th, 1844, he wrote a long article very much in praise of the *Vie de Rancé*. “The critic,” he says,⁴ “when it is a question of M. de Chateaubriand, is no longer a critic; he contents himself with collecting all the flowers on the way and filling his basket with them. In the antique fêtes this was the office of the canephorus, as he was called, and even in this cloister story, if we may be forgiven the image, we shall do like this.” As a matter of fact, Sainte-Beuve found the book very weak.⁵ He had studied Rancé a great deal himself for his *Port-Royal*.

¹ *Bibliothèque Nationale*, MSS. Fr. 12454.

² Letter of May 28th, 1844, quoted by Léon Séché (*Revue bleue* of March 10th, 1900, p. 318).

⁴ *Portr. cont.*, I. p. 49.

³ *Souv. personnels*, p. 346.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 80 and 81.

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Chateaubriand thanked him in a letter. Sainte-Beuve sent to the *Revue suisse* another article which he did not sign, and this one was very hard on Chateaubriand, who fortunately knew nothing about it. "We must say frankly," Sainte-Beuve writes,¹ "that this book, which was to be so simple and so austere, has become, from its lack of earnestness and from carelessness, a veritable medley. The author has flung everything in, mixed everything up, and turned out all his stores for it."

Chateaubriand had other misfortunes.² The company which owned his *Mémoires* had been gradually changing. The new shareholders welcomed the offer of the manager of the newspaper *La Presse*, M. Emile de Girardin, who for eighty thousand francs wanted to use the *Mémoires* as a serial, on the death of the author, before the publication in book form. The Abbaye-aux-Bois was indignant. Ballanche was annoyed that anyone should want to let the *Mémoires* suffer by the "ignoble spinning-out of the *feuilleton*."³ Chateaubriand examined his contract again, which did not authorize such a speculation. He protested with all his force, declaring that he was master of his own ashes, and that he would not allow them to be scattered to the winds. His friends succeeded finally in enforcing his rights.

It is once more from his letters to Mme. Récamier that we learn something about Chateaubriand's life in 1844 and 1845, about his sufferings and the last manifestations of his activity.

"PARIS, August 11th, 1844.⁴

"M. Magnin has just written telling me that he has given you his article, and that you were very pleased with it. Will you be good enough to send it me by François, who will come for it, so that I may give it at once to the *Débats*? It will soon be my hour, and I shall come to see you at half past two. Ever yours. How long have all my letters ended like this?"⁵

¹ *Chroniques parisiennes*, édit. C. Levy, 1876, p. 222.

² Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 369.

³ *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 134. "Dictated letter."

⁵ P. 226. Signed Chateaubriand. Address, Mme. Récamier, Rue de la Santé.

"PARIS, August 31st, 1844.¹

"I shall not be able to see you to-day, for I still have my whooping cough, which chokes me. If I cannot see you again in your convent, I shall hope soon to find you once more at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. It consoles me a little to know that you think of me. If by any chance you came to the Rue du Bac to-day I should tell you what I always tell you."²

"PARIS, September 11th, 1844.³

"You are journeying along the high-roads and I am putting on leeches, but they will always leave me some life for you. I have given up all idea of travelling for the present. You will find me just as you left me, except that I am a little more foolish; that is a condition which increases with time. Pacify the Marquis and come back quickly, so that I may live a few hours again. Very kind regards to Mme. Lenormant. I fear that Fontaine-Saint-Eloi will not agree very well with rheumatism. You will get this letter, I hope, on your arrival at Thibouville. You see what an idea is; it goes everywhere, like steam. Ever yours, then, and come back to those who are awaiting you and who love you. I am told that my leeches are ready; they are going to seize me by the throat."⁴

"PARIS, September 15th, 1844.⁵

"I should have written to you every day if I had had a single moment's tranquillity, but I am suffering horribly, and that must be my excuse. It was quite natural that M. Ampère should have been deceived about me. I never speak of my health, and I take care not to weary other people with it. Anyhow, you are coming back, and that will be an excellent way to cure me. Farewell then; I shall see you again in a few days. My happiness will then return."⁶

¹ P. 227. Dictated letter.

² Signed Chateaubriand. Address, Mme. Récamier, chez les Dames Ursulines, Rue de la Santé. ³ P. 228. Dictated.

⁴ Signed Chateaubriand. Address, Mme. Récamier, chez Mme. Lenormant, à la Rivière, Thibouville (Eure). ⁵ P. 229, dictated.

⁶ Signed Chateaubriand. Address, Mme. Récamier, Chapelle Saint-Eloi, près la Rivière, Thibouville (Eure).

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“PARIS, September 23rd.

“Last night I suffered a great deal, and the most distressing thing is the fact that it will be impossible for me to put my foot outdoors to-day ; but do not come, I beseech you—it would do you harm. To-morrow I shall bring you my wretched self again. In the meantime, whilst waiting for that happy moment, I am just the same as ever. Until to-morrow, then, without fail.”¹

[No date.]

“I was very ill last night, and shall bury myself in my room and not go out all day. It is great unhappiness to me to be a day without seeing you. To-morrow I hope to be able to breathe, and to go to your convent to say good-bye. Until to-morrow, then. The Abbé Serres affair is over at last. Thank God I have come out of these wretched royalist scandals with all the honours. How pitiful all this impotent boasting of a poor dying party is ! Good-bye, then, until to-morrow.”²

“PARIS, October 1st, 1844.

“I have had a deplorable night, and am going to shut myself up in my own room, as I am incapable of going out. Do not be alarmed, and do not be discouraged ; the cough, which is almost incessant and which hurts me so much, will get better, I hope. Pray for me and remain always attached to me ; that is the way to cure me. I will send you word through the day whether I am better or worse.”³

“PARIS, October 3rd, 1844.

“Mme. de Chateaubriand had just written to you. She will not send her letter now that I am writing to you. The night was very trying. I do not know how the next one will be. I am given up to the doctor and to mineral waters. God knows what faith I have in all that. The worst of it is that I cannot go out, and that I shall not see you unless you

¹ Signed Chateaubriand. Address, Mme. Récamier, à l'Abbaye-aux-Bois, Paris. Letter not numbered, between p. 229 and 230. Dictated. No date.

² Signed Chateaubriand, p. 230. Dictated letter. Address, Mme. Récamier, aux Dames Ursulines, Rue de la Santé.

³ Signature Chateaubriand, p. 231 of the collection. Dictated letter.

come, and I should be very vexed if you came out on my account. I owe a grudge to Heaven for cutting off some of my time like this, and there is so little of it left now. Yours ever, but I am not giving you anything of great account."¹

"Saturday, October 5th.

"The wretched 4th of October is over. My night was very bad, but I shall come to life again with the old² sun, in order to be at your service. Mme. de Staél wrote her last letters to you as I am doing. I cannot go out, but do not come, I beseech you, as the idea of going to see you will give me back my strength."³

"October 6th.

"If you do not come I want you at least to have these few lines from me. Courage! we are going through evil days. My love to you always."⁴

"Sunday, 22nd.

"How grateful I am to you, but in order to complete your generosity you must get well. Do yourself as much good as you do me. Try to read my letter; you will then have my last words, as my last words are for you. Good-bye until our hour at the Abbaye."⁵

"FONTAINEBLEAU, May 26th, 1845.

"Here I am at Fontainebleau. Arrived wonderfully well, but giddy after the endless, rough paving-stones. You have brought me luck. Everything will be right, and particularly in Italy, where I shall have no more jolting to endure. Care for me a little in return for my love for you. The weather is magnificent, and rather cool than warm. [In Chateaubriand's handwriting.] Adieu, adieu. Yours ever. Messages to all friends.

"CHATEAUBRIAND."⁶

¹ Signature Chateaubriand, p. 232. Dictated letter. ² Or "bright."

³ Autograph, p. 233. Almost illegible. Not signed.

⁴ P. 234. Autograph. Not signed. The short note, p. 235, published in *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 351, should be added to this.

⁵ P. 236. Autograph. Not signed.

⁶ P. 237. Add to this the letter, p. 238, published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 544 (read the "unfortunate prince" and not "the young prince") the autograph letter, p. 239, in *Esquisse d'un Maître*, p. 352. The dictated letter, p. 240, has not been published before, nor yet the dictated letter No. 241. The

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As will be seen from this last letter, Chateaubriand was once more moving about. On the 22nd of February, 1845, he had put his signature to the end of the last volume of the *Mémoires*. It can still be seen in the Champion manuscript; and then,¹ as he was anxious to see his young King once more, he started for Venice.

The Abbaye-aux-Bois was very uneasy about this piece of imprudence, as the following letter from Ballanche, which must date from May 24th, 1845, proves :²

“MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

“We have none of us received any news direct from Ampère. A letter, or perhaps several letters, must have gone astray at Lazaret. We knew that Ampère was very tired towards the end of his journey, and that he thought he would have to stay longer at Malta after his quarantine, which lasted twelve days. Yesterday we heard through Mme. de Noailles, who had received a letter, not from Ampère, but from someone who was at Malta at the same time as he was. According to this letter, Ampère is quite well again, and he intended starting the following day, the 16th, so that at the time I am writing to you he is in France and on the way to Paris.

“Now we have Ampère coming back, and you will soon be thinking of returning. And now M. de Chateaubriand is leaving to-morrow not for the Pyrenees, but for Venice. Venice, do you hear that? I quite think that a journey might do him good, and that he perhaps requires to get away from Paris for a short time. But this journey makes us wretched, and we are very uneasy about it, as he will have to cross the Alps, and the season is still rough. He is going through Lyons, in order to take Mont Cenis and get to Venice by Turin and Milan. He is accompanied by M. Daniels. We should have preferred another secretary for him.

“M. de Chateaubriand is as well as when you left him as

dictated letter No. 242 is published in part in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 549 (it was written September 7th, 1845), the dictated letter No. 243 *ibid.*, p. 550. The dictated note, p. 244 (September 23rd, 1845), has not been published before.

¹ Léon Séché, *Les manuscrits des Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, p. 314.

² Letters to various people, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

regards health, but his poor legs are extremely feeble. This journey troubles us very much on that account."

Ampère had made a journey to Egypt in 1844.¹ He returned from there ill and with his constitution greatly affected. The Abbaye-aux-Bois was very anxious about him for a long time. Mme. Récamier herself could only go out in the mornings now. Ballanche was doing scarcely any work. He published a fragment, however, in 1845, entitled *Alexandrie*.² He brought the Academy news to the Abbaye. Outside, religious discussions were raging, and the worthy Ballanche rejoiced at this, as he saw in it a proof of the ascendancy of Catholicism.³ Mme. Récamier employed all her remaining courage in caring for all her invalid friends and in defending, to the best of her ability, those whom she had cared for formerly, or at any rate admitted into her intimacy.

Sainte-Beuve had been elected member of the Academy on the 14th of March, 1844, thanks to the support of Chateaubriand, Molé, and Ballanche. A month later his intercourse with the Abbaye came very near being compromised by an incident.⁴ He had published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of April 15th, 1844, a long article on *Benjamin Constant et Mme. de Charrière*. Several times over, Sainte-Beuve had been tempted by this authoress, whom Mme. de Staél had known and esteemed. He had devoted to her one of his *Portraits de femmes*. He considered the *Lettres neuchâteloises* a master-piece. This time he wanted to retrace the affection she had had for Constant when he was quite young. "Cherubin already a trifle emancipated," he had called him, and in his conclusion, although he maintained that he did not wish to blame him, Sainte-Beuve gave an intelligent and severe criticism of Constant. "He spent his life," he said, "preaching a Liberal policy without esteeming men, in

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 129 and following. *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 319 and following.

² In *Le Correspondant*, XI, pp. 424-432.

³ See his letter of June 12th, 1845, to Ampère. *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 330 and following.

⁴ See C. Latreille, *Sainte-Beuve et Chateaubriand*, pp. 388-389.

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professing religiosity without having faith, in searching for emotion in everything without attaining to passion."¹

Mme. Récamier knew better than anyone else all that there was contradictory in Benjamin, in that nature "both sincere and untrue, eloquent and arid, warm and spiritless," as Sainte-Beuve had said so excellently. But she thought herself obliged to defend his memory.² Louis de Loménie, either inspired by her or simply to please her, replied to Sainte-Beuve by giving a portrait of Constant in his *Galerie des contemporains illustres*.³ The *Homme de rien* reproached the psychological critic with having only known a Benjamin Constant old and *blasé*, with not having sufficiently distinguished the natural man under his attitudes; and he summed up, probably summing up at the same time the opinion of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, everything about Constant, by quoting this simple phrase of the young, agreeable, and paradoxical writer to a witty and paradoxical dowager: "Love me in spite of my follies. I am a good sort of fellow at bottom."

Sainte-Beuve, roused by this, wrote *Un dernier mot sur Benjamin Constant* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of November 1st, 1845.⁴ The paper *Le Semeur* seemed to consider L. de Loménie was in the right.⁵ With a courtesy in which a certain maliciousness was evident, Sainte-Beuve referred to his own criticism in order to defend and confirm. He had never been more shrewd, more delicate, nor had he ever given such fine shades. According to him, it was at the close of this little polemic, which was quite a literary one and had been carried on in the best tone possible, that Mme. Récamier decided to allow the letters which Constant had written to her to be published—those letters which passed into the hands of Louise Colet, and were later on the occasion of a law-suit.⁶

¹ *Portr. litt.*, III, p. 280.

² See Sainte-Beuve's note at the end of his article.

³ Vol. VIII.

⁴ See *Portr. cont.*, édit. C. Lévy, Vol. V.

⁵ In its number of October 8th, 1845.

⁶ See Sainte-Beuve's note, *Portr. litt.*, III, p. 281 and following.

She was just as faithful to the memory of Augustus of Prussia as to that of Benjamin Constant.

The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz had not forgotten that winter of 1807-1808, when he had met Mme. Récamier for the first time.¹ In 1843 he wrote to her, asking for her portrait by Gérard, which had been sent back to the Abbaye on the death of Prince Augustus.² Mme. Récamier would not consent to part with a work which brought back to her so many memories. The Grand Duke George contented himself with asking for a lithograph, which she sent him. "You would not regret it, I can assure you," he wrote to Juliette on the 3rd of January, 1845, "if your extreme modesty would allow you to realize the worship that would be given to this picture, the original of which has always seemed to me the symbol of all that Heaven and earth have ever brought together in the way of beauty. This homage will be yours, Madame, as long as my soul exists."³ His delight on receiving the keepsake which he had desired caused him to write another charming letter:⁴

"Whenever I recall the fact," he says, "that I dared to let my thoughts dwell on that master-piece [Gérard's picture], I never fail to repeat to myself the words of our excellent poet Schiller: 'We must not ask for the stars.' These words are always balm for the wound which I am trying to heal. At eighty-six years of age there can no longer be any question of folly nor of vanity and, with the incontestable proofs you have received that thirty years of separation have had no effect on the noble and beautiful impressions which you left in the hearts of your friends, I ventured to hope that I should not be misunderstood. Heaven be praised, I was not mistaken. I am going to make one more request, and this is that you will mention my name to M. de Chateaubriand, in case he should still deign to remember me. I dare not flatter myself that I shall be so much honoured, but if I were to have such good fortune I should be very happy to let him

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 88 and following.

² *Ibid.*, p. 90.

³ Unpublished letter in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection. (Letters from foreigners.)

⁴ March 28th, 1845, in the same collection.

know that I congratulate myself always in having been fortunate enough to meet him. Forgive me, Madame, if this letter should seem too long to you, and remember that it is difficult to come to the end when one is writing from the heart."

We see thus that life at the Abbaye now consisted chiefly of souvenirs. We have gathered some information about this epoch from one of Mme. Récamier's nephews, M. Delphin. He came in 1843 to this *salon*, which his father had left in 1815. "The Abbaye," he says, "had still the same severity of manners, but as a set-off to this a great reserve and a certain indulgence, due to a profound sentiment of what conscience owes to honest and generous convictions. There was a great deal of reverence. As regards religion, I fancy that, with the exception of my cousin, M. Lenormant, who was only converted towards 1842, everyone held somewhat aloof, except a few men like M. Vitet and Guizot. Mme. Récamier went to confession. She had chosen for her confessor an admirable priest, who was very simple in his ways and manners and not worldly, Father Morcel, a Marist. He told me that his penitent was holy through her tenderness. But this excessive loving kindness had led her into several heresies that are already known. Father Morcel did not hesitate, though, to give her absolution."

According to this testimony, nothing could be more incorrect than to imagine the Abbaye-aux-Bois, even towards its close, as the centre of a morose coterie. Right to the very end, the presence of a woman, "holy through her tenderness," kept up that indulgence, that gentleness of manners, which soothed the last hours of men like Chateaubriand and Ballanche, and rendered them almost unconscious of the passage from life to death.

CHAPTER XXV

DEATH OF BALLANCHE, CHATEAUBRIAND, AND MME. RÉCAMIER (1846-1849)

Chateaubriand's decline.—Ampère admitted to the French Academy (1847).—Death of Mme. de Chateaubriand, February 9th, 1847 ; idea of marriage between Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier.—Death of Ballanche (June 12th).—Last reading of the *Mémoires*.—Death of Chateaubriand (July 4th, 1848).—Publication of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*.—Death of Mme. Récamier (May 11th, 1849).—Her will.

NOTHING could be more inexact, and in a word nothing could be more gratuitously wrong, than that *Chronique parisienne*, published in the *Revue suisse* of June, 1844,¹ in which Sainte-Beuve accused Chateaubriand and his imitators of mourning their youth “with tears and groans” worthy “of an Asiatic king.” He recalls Mme. Dubarry’s famous speech on the scaffold, “Executioner, let me have another minute,” and in this absence of resignation of which he complains he sees the proof of a “something wanting morally,” of an “Epicurean life of pleasure under a veneer of mysticism and religiosity.” This reproach is amusing, coming from Sainte-Beuve.

That is mere fanciful criticism ; the following is the direct testimony given us by Louis de Loménie in a fragment of his *Souvenirs inédits*,² dated September 30th, 1846 : “M. de Chateaubriand had hurt his arm in getting out of his carriage. Mme. Récamier assured me that he had complained of not seeing me more often at his house, so I went to call on him to-day. I found the illustrious old man, his arm in a sling, bent nearly double rather than seated in a chair placed in

¹ See *Chronique parisienne*, p. 222 and following.

² M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

front of the window of his little garden. It appears from what he told me, that he spends the greater part of his day like this, absorbed in himself, reading nothing, and with no other diversion than to gaze at this little garden, which is very much neglected, but which suits him, he says, as it resembles a cemetery. The poor great man is frightfully dull: nothing diverts him, he does not care for anything, he knows less and less of what is going on in the world; he has no children, no family. Mme. de Chateaubriand seems to me to be just as bored as he is; outsiders keep more and more away from a man who feels to such a degree the malady of low spirits, so that in my opinion his old age is one of the saddest imaginable.

“‘Good Heavens! how glad I should be if it were all over,’ he said to me to-day. Everything in politics and in literature is odious to him. No one could be more dead morally than this poor Chateaubriand. . . . I noticed that in the course of conversation he quoted some poetry to me now and then which was more or less *à propos*, as though he were under the influence of some dream. His nerves, too, are in a very irritable state, and the upper part of his body and the muscles of his face frequently twitch.”¹

Chateaubriand could scarcely walk at all, so that after driving to the Abbaye two valets had to carry him from the carriage up to the drawing-room and install him in an armchair.

Some of Chateaubriand’s last letters to Mme. Récamier will give us an idea about the end of this great life.²

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 554.

² In his *Chateaubriana* Sainte-Beuve quotes the following fragment from a letter dated 1847: “A very illustrious dead man, who really ought to be called dead, since he no longer lives the only life to which he aspired, Chateaubriand is very unfortunate, as he can no longer leave his room. Mme. Récamier goes every day to see him, but she only sees him under the watchful gaze of Mme. de Chateaubriand, who is at last avenging herself for fifty years of neglect. It is her day now with the sublime but fickle man, after so many beauties, who had each in turn charmed him. This woman is intelligent, devout, and ironical; in consideration of all her virtues she forgives herself her faults. Ah, how much better all of you others were! You, Hortense, would have given M. de Chateaubriand his last joys, his last remembrances of René, for Mme. Récamier takes a lower tone with him. He is no longer our Chateaubriand, she makes another one of him, but for you he would find some remnants of the far-off inspiration and murmurs from *Germanie* and from wild Gaul. Take care of his last

"PARIS, June 25th, 1846.

"I am very ill. I have had a very bad night. I cannot go out this morning. Forgive me, and pray for me. Yours, ever yours."¹

"Here I am settled. Yesterday I got out at the Champ de Mars, when my two steeds, feeling frisky, set off suddenly, dragging me along a little way. I cannot go to see you, therefore, to-day. Farewell then until to-morrow, if I feel a little better. You see what it is to be at Beauséjour. May Heaven make peace for Mme. Daguesseau. Farewell then until to-morrow, if, as I hope, I am able to move to-morrow.

"CH.

"Thursday morning, August 17th [1846]."²

"PARIS, January 25th, 1847.

"I am very ill this morning, and I despair of being able to go to see you; only a word from you could cure me. Pity me and love me just a little always; I will then take up my life again, although I am very tired of it. Ever yours, ever yours."³

At the end of July, 1847, Chateaubriand went to Dieppe with M. Mandaroux-Vertamy,⁴ and stayed there a week. He was the object "of a holy enthusiasm," his travelling companion wrote to Mme. Récamier:⁵ "Visits from men, women,

letters; they are *true* things from an illustrious genius who has had only too few of these flashes of truth. You will do honour to him some day with these unintentional testimonies. His memory must be very busy, for he is like those who have lived too long. What I hear causes me great sadness. He said the other day to one of his friends, whom he had difficulty in recognizing, and whom he took first for the father and then for the uncle: 'I can no longer think of anything for two consecutive minutes.' Feeling this he is quiet. I am paying him my last homage of respect by not going to see him. I should prefer being treated like this myself." . . . In this somewhat cruel intelligence, which noted down so instantaneously the clearly sketched impressions, Sainte-Beuve's method is recognizable. This letter is from his pen, with the exception of the few lines about Hortense. Did Chateaubriand still see her in 1847? The letter is more just, at any rate, than the article in the *Revue suisse*. (See *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 396-397.)

¹ P. 245. Note dictated but not signed.

² The whole letter is dictated. After p. 245 in the collection, published in part in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 553.

³ Dictated letter, but signed (p. 246). The signature is very uneven.

⁴ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 559.

⁵ P. 248 of Vol. II of Chateaubriand's original letters.

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priests, laymen, and deputations—nothing was wanting.” He soon grew tired of it, and returned promptly to Paris.¹ The letters he wrote at this time to Mme. Récamier and to Mme. Lenormant are the last of the valuable collection which has revealed to us such treasures.

Mme. Récamier was losing her eyesight. In 1847 she underwent an operation for cataract which was not a success, perhaps because the patient was in too great a hurry to return to her usual habits.² She bore all these trials courageously. On the 2nd of December, 1846, Marceline Desbordes-Valmore wrote to her husband of Mme. Récamier as follows: “She has been to see me twice; she is really busying herself with doing something for us, for your son and then for you through M. Salvandy, or Marshal Gérard, or M. Guizot. Her graciousness is always at work and is irresistible.”³ To the very end Marceline was most grateful to her benefactress. In an album of her poems in the library at Douai⁴ this enthusiastic note is to be seen: “Mme. Récamier, M. de Chateaubriand, Ballanche, Sainte-Beuve, and my son! What a delightful day! The Abbaye-aux-Bois was buzzing with children in the sunshine, in holiday clothes, carrying in their arms, all trembling with joy, the prizes they had just received at the school from the sisters who are responsible for their education.”

Ampère’s election to the Academy in 1847,⁵ as the successor of Alexandre Guiraud, brought a little joy to the Abbaye. Chateaubriand had had himself taken to the Institute in order to give him his vote and help him by his influence. “He was rather agitated,” wrote de Vigny in his *Journal* on the 22nd of April,⁶ “by the pleasure of seeing himself reckoned amongst the living and by the hope of Ampère’s election. The worthy Ballanche was with him, and appeared

¹ See his letter (p. 252) to Mme. Lenormant in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 559, and the letter (p. 254) of July 28th, *ibid.*, p. 561, slightly abridged. A letter of the 9th of August (p. 255) has not been published.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 555.

³ *Corr. intime*, published by B. Rivière, II, p. 141. Compare H. Valmore’s letter, *ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴ *Corr. intime*, published by B. Rivière, I, p. 205.

⁵ *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 338.

⁶ *Journal d’un Poète*, p. 213. Compare p. 219.

proud to see him get to the second floor; his large eyes softened and his beautiful expression then became inex-pressibly sweet. This grace was no doubt given him from above for the sake of mollifying the surprising ugliness which the wen on his left cheek gives him, as it is quite a deformity." Ampère, supported by the University group, had had to struggle against the royal influence that was helping Vatout. His success dissipated for a short time the dejection and sadness which were weighing on the Abbaye, where Mme. Récamier was bearing all the burden of Chateaubriand's dejection.¹

Mme. de Chateaubriand had died on the 9th of February, 1847. Her body was laid under the altar of the Marie-Thérèse Infirmary, which she had founded.² A few months after her death, Chateaubriand begged his admirable friend to accept the name that he bore. She refused this homage, delicate though it was.³ Are we to conclude with Cuvillier-Fleury⁴ that she could not resign herself to the heroism of writing her age on a marriage certificate? This is very far-fetched wit. Once again Louis de Loménie gives us the most exact information. "I recollect," he notes in his *Souvenirs manuscrits*, "that after the death of Mme. de Chateaubriand, Mme. Récamier had an idea of marrying Chateaubriand. She had an explanation about it with me. She told me that the idea had first come from M. de Chateaubriand, but I saw from what she said that she had liked the idea in spite of all its inconveniences, for there had been a question of installing M. de Chateaubriand, with all his infirmities and unsociable character, in Mme. du Rozay's flat. The plan met with a great deal of opposition at the Abbaye, as it was feared that Mme. Récamier might have much unpleasantness and many worries through it. Nevertheless, it seemed to me that she was anxious for it, and she only gave it up on account of the observations made

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 141.

² Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 385.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 558.

⁴ *Posthumes et revenants*, p. 280. In his correspondence with the Comtesse de Montijo, Mérimée mentions the rumour of the marriage of Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier (*Aug. Filon, Mérimée et ses amis*, p. 166).

by an advocate of the Court of Appeal, M. Mandaroux-Vertamy,¹ Chateaubriand's executor. He pointed out to her, I fancy, certain things from a legal point of view respecting Chateaubriand's affairs. When she spoke to me about it, after having a conversation with this gentleman, she dwelt on the fact that he seemed to think the idea was hers and she assured me that it had come from M. de Chateaubriand." The plan was not carried out, and indeed another death in the circle interfered with it.

Ballanche's last years would have been very sad for him without the comfort that Mme. Récamier's presence brought him. He compared himself to a plant.² His political ideas had become more bitter; reading the *Constitutionnel* used more particularly to make him indignant. "What a Government for our poor French people!" he wrote in one of his last letters to his most faithful friend.³ "How can they be expected to keep the little they have left of religious sentiment or even of moral sentiment? I assure you that I am not alarming myself without cause. I know very well that I should have to argue with the *âme exilée*. She is fortunate in having kept the enthusiasm of youth. And it is, perhaps, fortunate for me not to have the faculty of writing the sad pages with which the situation would inspire me. I should, however, like to be in a state when I return to take part, according to my capability, in the present discussion. The University only seems to be good, in my opinion, for perverting the new generation, and the clergy does not yet suffice. You see, in spite of all that is said and done, I am obliged to own at the end of it all that the University is Voltairean. The official nation—that is, the Chamber of Deputies and the electoral colleges—is Voltairean. Voltaire is the expression of the French mind, and Voltaire, that means the dissolution of all religious or family bonds and of every kind of morality. Voltaire and the *feuilletons* are a *cholera morbus* which will not last, I hope. May God help us!"

¹ M. Ch. de Lacombe's father-in-law.

² Unpublished letter to Mme. Récamier, No. 158 of M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

³ Same letter.

Sometimes he used to go to the house of the author of the *Mémoires* and take part in those discussions in which Mme. de Chateaubriand defended the Abbé Grégoire. He had had to give up playing chess. His keenest desire was for solitude when Mme. Récamier left him, and he gradually gave up the idea of writing a last volume which he had planned.¹ His only effort now was to become resigned. His affairs, too, were in great danger of being compromised by the strange passion he had for inventions and inventors. He had been persuaded into taking part in an enterprise which was to bring about changes in navigation and steam traction. Mme. Récamier was very uneasy when she saw her poor Ballanche in search of a new motor power, but he never lost confidence, and he counted on his scientific merit quite as much as on his literary titles for his future fame.

Ballanche died on the 12th of June, 1847. Mme. Récamier did not leave his bedside.² Victor de Laprade, whom the philosopher considered as his dearest disciple, was with Mme. Récamier, and together they heard his last words. Laprade spent the last night of prayer watching the dead body with the Abbé Tranchant. Ballanche was buried in the Montmartre cemetery, in a vault that had been prepared for Mme. Récamier. "She made room in her own tomb for poor Ballanche," wrote John Lemoinne,³ "and she joined him there a few years later. It was there that he kissed her for the first time. At last!" On the day of the funeral, among the followers were Villemain, de Tocqueville, Dupaty, in the name of the French Academy; Laprade, in the name of the city and Academy of Lyons. The mourners were Ampère and Lenormant, representing the adopted family of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. De Tocqueville and Laprade spoke at the grave.⁴ It was Alexis de Saint-Priest who spoke in praise of him at the Academy. Mme. Récamier received a great number of letters of condolence. She made a point of answering them, although, on account

¹ According to the letter of September 13th, 1845, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² *Sour. et Corr.*, II, p. 556.

³ *Débats* of November 24th, 1859.

⁴ *Revue du Lyonnais*, XXV, Lyons, 1847, p. 556.

of her eyesight, she was obliged to dictate her letters.¹ In the world outside, his praise was to be heard everywhere. In the *Revue nouvelle* of August 1st, 1847,² Charles Jourdain also paid his homage to the memory of the Christian philosopher, and the *Revue nationale* of September devoted an article to him.

A modern critic has called Ballanche the *Lyonese Socrates*. "If he went about in the world like a somnambulist, if his apocalypses were too inaccessible for the crowd, nevertheless all was not an illusion, due to friendship, in the mysterious glory which he owed to works that were applauded by the *cortège* of Mme. Récamier, his beautiful fellow-citizen, whom he adored at a distance like a Laura or a Beatrice—that is to say, an ideal to whom his pure enthusiasm as a disinterested contemplator was dedicated."³ "M. Ballanche," wrote Paul David, "was, I will not say her sole confidant, for Mme. Récamier honoured us all with absolute confidence, discussing constantly at our private gatherings her plans, her actions, even her letters—but M. Ballanche was generally her secretary, and it was either his hand or that of her niece, Mme. Lenormant, which she most frequently employed. It was in this way that he wrote that mystic will which was given up afterwards, as it was feared that this form of will by a blind woman might be invalid, and it was followed by an authentic will, which was merely the reproduction of the same wishes in another form."⁴

Mme. Récamier was greatly affected by this separation. Whilst Chateaubriand was travelling again in order to see his friend Hyde de Neuville once more, she went with her niece to the country.⁵ Ampère wrote to her regularly, and begged her

¹ See her letter of July 26th, 1847, to Fleury Richard (*Une page de la vie lyonnaise*).

² Vol. XVI. See also *Notice nécrologique sur P. S. Ballanche*, by A. Aubert, Paris, Plon, 1847 in-8. Bibl. Nat., Ln²⁷, 927. On the 28th of May, 1848, a professor of the Faculty of Letters of Louvain, Félix Nève, read to the Literary Society of that town a paper in praise of Ballanche. On the 25th of January, 1848, at the Lyons Académie, Laprade read a notice on Ballanche, his life and writings (Lyons, Léon Boitel, 1848, 67 pages). On the 6th of January, Vatout was elected to the Academy as Ballanche's successor, but he died in 1849. ³ Merlet, *Tableau*, p. 126.

⁴ *Protestation de M. David*. M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁵ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 559.

to take plenty of rest, in order to recover from the emotion which Ballanche's death had caused her.¹ He was preparing the volume that he published in 1848 on the author of the *Palingénésie*. Mme. Récamier collaborated in this work as far as she could by helping to choose the extracts, and by having her friend's affectionate letters read to her by her nieces for this purpose.² When the volume appeared she sent it to the persons it was likely to interest. Guizot congratulated the author.³ The Grand Duke of Saxony wrote a very charming letter of thanks : "At the same time as the work on M. Ballanche I read an article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*⁴ announcing M. de Chateaubriand's *Mémoires*. I welcome them beforehand with double delight, for the memory of your *salon* at the Abbaye-aux-Bois makes me attach a special interest to them ; and the hope of seeing, in the midst of the chaos of present circumstances, a monument such as it is said that the author of the *Génie du Christianisme* has built up in the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* charms me."⁵

The Revolution of 1848, the campaign of banquets, the resignation of Guizot, the abdication of Louis-Philippe and his flight to Dreux, the proclamation of the Republic on the 25th of February, could not very much disturb Mme. Récamier, who was now blind, nor yet Chateaubriand, whose end was so near. The poor woman lived in a darkened room, and visitors had to grope their way about in the large *salon* of the Abbaye, with its closed shutters and drawn curtains. "The light when the door was opened would not have sufficed for guiding one's footsteps," writes a guest, "if the gentle voice of the poor blind woman had not led you towards the large screen which was placed around her armchair. . . . Chateaubriand . . . remains wrapped in his persistent taciturnity."⁶

"Chateaubriand is more silent than ever," wrote Sainte-

¹ *Corr. des Ampère*, II, p. 148 and following.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 560. *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 341. ³ See *Le Correspondant*, 1896, Vol. CXLVI, p. 417.

⁴ Louis de Loménie's article.

⁵ Letter of October 28th, 1848. Unpublished letter, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

⁶ The Comte d'Estournel, *Derniers Souvenirs*, p. 17. Quoted by Biré, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 391.

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Beuve to Collombet on the 7th of September, 1847 ;¹ “he is in a dream. His refined mouth still smiles, his eyes weep, his wide forehead in repose retains all its majesty. But what is there within it and beneath it? Is there anything there?” At times, though, the old poet seemed to come back to life. He recited poetry, and when alone with Mme. Récamier and a few friends he would choose some passage from a celebrated work and quote it as far as his memory held out, and Mme. Récamier would then continue the quotation.²

Shortly before the Revolution of February, probably in May 1847, Chateaubriand had a little gathering of six friends, always the same persons, every morning at his house in the Rue du Bac. Before this audience the *Mémoires* were once more read. The little assembly was both sad and solemn, nothing like the brilliant gatherings of 1834.

“Picture to yourself,” writes one of those present,³ “a bedroom as simple and modest as a monk’s cell; at the end of the room, to the left on entering, a little iron bedstead with white curtains; between the curtains a crucifix hung on the wall; facing the bed two windows looking on to a shady, silent garden, which in its turn looks on to the beautiful large garden belonging to the Foreign Missions. Opposite the chimney-piece one of Raphael’s finest pictures, *François the First’s Holy Family*, copied by Mignard. That is the chief, or rather the only, ornament of the room. On the mantel-shelf two small statues, one representing M. de Fitz-James, and the other Velléda; a few books on the various pieces of furniture and, between the foot of the bed and the wall, a wooden case with a broken lock that did not fasten.”

This case contained the manuscript of the *Mémoires*. Chateaubriand sat in an armchair to the left of the chimney-piece, his head bent towards his right shoulder, looking towards the window. Mme. Récamier arrived with a hesitating step, “her arms slightly stretched out in front of

¹ *Lettres inédites de Sainte-Beuve*, Latreille et Roustan, p. 238. See in V. Hugo, *Choses vues*, new series (Paris, 1900), three pages on the end and death of Chateaubriand, p. 203 and following.

² L. de Loménie, *Chateaubriand et les Mémoires d’Outre-Tombe*, *Rivue des Deux Mondes*, July 15th, 1848, p. 134, note 1.

³ L. de Loménie, article quoted.

her." She used to take with her the Comtesse Caffarelli, widow of the celebrated General, whom she had only known since the death of Mme. de Chateaubriand, but who proved a friend to her in her last days.¹ Ampère, Noailles, Ballanche, and Loménié then arrived, and the reading commenced.

It was Louis de Loménié who announced to Chateaubriand, the evening of the 24th of February, that France was about to become a Republic. He merely smiled, without replying.² Béranger came to see him, and Chateaubriand said to him, "Well, you have your Republic!" "Yes," answered Béranger, "but I would rather dream of it again than see it."³ On the 22nd of February, Guizot had confided to the care of Mme. Lenormant his mother and his children, and they were staying at the Royal Library until they could start for England.⁴ Mme. Récamier's friends were very uneasy about her. On the 22nd of February, Marceline Valmore wrote to Sainte-Beuve: "I am praying for the people and for you, for the charming shadow of Mme. Récamier. May the angels hear me!"⁵ The "charming shadow" was entirely taken up with caring for Chateaubriand, who was fast declining day by day. She had undergone a second operation for cataract, but with no more success than the first one.⁶ She was not destined to recover her eyesight. She spent her time tending the dying man, whom the June days roused slightly from his somnolency. According to Mme. Lenormant, he was affected by the death of the Archbishop of Paris,⁷ but after this he scarcely roused at all from his silence. He could no longer speak, and Mme. Récamier could no longer see.

On the 8th of April, 1848, J. J. Ampère wrote to Barante to give him news of Mme. Récamier.

"These last five or six days have been very difficult ones for her. She has fits of suffocation, which are not dangerous but very painful, and which keep returning for several days and nights, leaving her thoroughly exhausted. This time when she was just getting better M. de Chateaubriand had a return

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 561.

² Article quoted, p. 137.

³ *Lettres à Collombet*, p. 240.

⁴ *Le Correspondant*, 1896, Vol. CXLVI, p. 405.

⁵ Vicomte de Lovenjoul, *Sainte-Beuve inconnu*, p. 228.

⁶ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 562.

⁷ *Ibid.*

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of his catarrh, accompanied by great weakness and some feverishness, so that yesterday morning M. Cruveilhier was very anxious. Imagine the state of Mme. Récamier. She is very much distressed at all the troubles she sees around her and at the general uneasiness. It is difficult to reassure her in presence of the unknown. . . ."¹

Chateaubriand died on Tuesday the 4th of July, 1848, at a quarter past eight in the morning. Mme. Récamier had gone to stay at Mme. Mohl's, in order to be within call of her dying friend.² Mme. Lenormant was several times alone with her aunt at the bedside of the dying man. "Every time that Mme. Récamier, overcome by grief, went out of the room, he watched her as she moved away, without recalling her, but with an anguish due to the dread of not seeing her again."³ She was present at the last, together with Louis de Chateaubriand, the Abbé de Guerry, and the Superior of the Convent of Marie-Thérèse.⁴

The funeral was at Paris, on the 8th of July. The ceremony was an imposing one. A deputation from the French Academy, nearly all the Institute, many noted men of letters, the representatives of the press, and the representatives of the people, accompanied the illustrious dead man to the Church of the Missions.⁵ On returning from the funeral service, Sainte-Beuve wrote in his note-book these words, so sad in their truth:⁶ "There was a crowd. Béranger was there, and during the whole of the service he never ceased talking to his neighbour, M. de Vitrolles. They were both most amiable to each other. This is the end of all, then. Oh néant! Be a Chateaubriand—that is, a Catholic and a Royalist—write the *Génie du Christianisme* and *La Monarchie selon la Charte*, and then at your funeral, all convictions being worn out as yours were, Béranger and M. de Vitrolles will meet and never part again."⁷

¹ *Souv. du baron de Barante*, VII, pp. 311 and 312.

² O'Meara, work quoted, p. 80.

³ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 565.

⁴ L. de Loménie, article quoted, p. 707.

⁵ Bire, *Dernières années de Chateaubriand*, p. 396.

⁶ *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 398.

⁷ Chateaubriand had, by a clause in his will in 1847, left to the Comte de Chateaubriand, his nephew, a bust of himself by the sculptor David. This bust was at Mme. Récamier's, from whom the heir claimed it. On

On the 10th of July, 1848, J. J. Ampère wrote to Barante : " You can judge, Monsieur, in what a state Mme. Récamier was, crushed both body and soul. For some time past nothing could have been more painful than the tending with such ceaseless devotion her illustrious friend. He scarcely spoke at all, and he hardly saw whether she was with him. She was thus separated from him doubly. This state of perpetual anxiety, such as one feels when one is away from those one loves, Mme. Récamier experienced while in his presence. She was there when he ceased to live. *She did not see him die.* She knew that all was over here below, because the prayers ceased. She is now overwhelmed by great fatigue, but already turning her attention to all that concerns the memory of him who is no more. She is having his correspondence read to her, and is preoccupied about his *Mémoires*, the publication of which may take place under conditions which are troubling her."¹ The Comtesse de Boigne gave proof of the most delicate affection for Mme. Récamier in this last and painful crisis.²

the other hand, a picture of the Holy Family, bequeathed to Mme. Récamier by Chateaubriand about 1831, was in the hands of M. Mandaroux-Vertamy, to whom it was left in the will of 1847. Mme. Récamier gave up the picture and the bust. Chateaubriand's heirs offered her an epergne which had belonged to her friend, but she refused it, and would only accept two vases, which were given later on by Mme. Lenormant to the chapel of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Mme. Lenormant asked, though, for any of her aunt's letters which might be found among the great author's papers. Not one was found, and a letter from the Comte de Chateaubriand, dated June 10th, 1849, affirms this.

¹ *Souv. et Corr. du baron de Barante*, VII, pp. 351 and 352. A letter from the Comte Alexis de Saint-Priest to the same announces to him on the 6th of November, 1848, that Mme. Récamier is " very unwell "; *ibid.*, p. 389. In a letter from the Duc Pasquier to the same (December 17th, 1848) : " Poor Mme. Récamier is in about the same state as far as her eye is concerned, and no one dare speak to her about the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*. Is it not astonishing that a man so offensive for so many persons and so many sentiments should seem to be, at the same time, under the protection of the most inoffensive person one could ever meet ? " *Ibid.*, p. 410 and following.

² *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 346. On Tuesday the 1st of August, 1848, the Comtesse de Boigne wrote Mme. Récamier a long letter, from which we take the following passages :

" I do not recognize your strength of mind and your tender heart in your self-abandonment, which is the despair of the faithful friends who are left to you. . . . That powerful genius had worn himself out before wearing out his body. Your affection and his glory are now all that remains of him. You will have no difficulty in mingling them and in identifying

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Guizot, who had retreated to Brompton, near London, was interested in Mme. Récamier. He wrote as follows to Mme. Lenormant on the 10th of June, 1848 :

"Remember me, I beg, to your aunt. Had it ever entered into her head that she would see such things again, as foolish and much more stupid?"¹ On the 8th of July the same year, after Chateaubriand's death, he wrote again to his faithful correspondent : "I hope he did not suffer much in dying. The loss will be great for your aunt. Customs that have their origin in affection still give us happiness even when they do not bring us any more affection. Will she now live with you ? Give us details."² Although Guizot very much admired Chateaubriand's genius, he considered that he had weaknesses of character, and he only toned down his language about the author of the *Génie* out of respect for Mme. Récamier and Mme. Lenormant.³ He fancied, too, that the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* in their primitive form must have been rather hard on him. "On correcting those proofs," he wrote to Mme. Lenormant in a letter of May 2nd, 1858, "your friendship for me must have made you soften or suppress more than one passage. I must say that I, too, have done the same on your account. I had neither ill-will nor anger to suppress, as I did not feel either, but more than once I have made my criticism milder and suppressed words of blame for one thing or another. I have completely withdrawn, for instance, what I said in my first sketch about his journey to Prague, and of his affectation in speaking disdainfully of his princes, his cause, and his friends. . . . I consider Chateau-them together. It is in this way that you will have sweeter memories. Alas ! for a long time already you had only been living on these through a very, very sad present, for I saw how cruelly you were suffering through the weakness that you could not hide from yourself nor yet from others, in spite of the zeal of your tactful affection. . . . My dear friend, I beseech you, do not make a religion of picturing him to your heart such as he was at the last. That would neither be worthy of him nor of you. Remember, too, that although his memory has no need of auxiliaries, yet the care of it has fallen into hands that are neither very intelligent nor yet very much attached to him, and that you ought not to allow yourself to be so dejected as to lose all influence on that side. The hopeless position of M. de Girardin will probably make him very exacting. He is clever and not very scrupulous, and it is essential not to risk a wrong step in that quarter." M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

¹ *Les années de retraite de M. Guizot*, p. 8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 9. Compare p. 55. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 68. Compare p. 78 and p. 109.

briand was only really affectionate and irreproachable in one of his friendships, and that was with your aunt. I shall say that somewhere.”¹

The day following the death of Chateaubriand, Béranger called to see Mme. Récamier and condole with her.² Louis Napoleon, who was appointed representative of the people, also called at the Abbaye, but he did not find Mme. Récamier, who did not care to meet him again.³ She received Daniel Stern during the month of March, and a somewhat ungracious account of this interview was the result.⁴ Daniel found her “in a rather old-looking drawing-room. She was seated at the corner of the chimney-piece on a blue silk lounge, round which was a grey screen. She was still slender and upright. She was wearing a black dress and shoulder cape. Her white cap was trimmed with grey ribbon. Her face was pale, her features delicate, and she wore a front of brown hair curled in the old-fashioned style. Her expression was sweet, and her voice also. She received me very graciously, although with difficulty. She complained of her eyesight, which was very weak and, stroking with her little slender hand my ermine muff, the whiteness of which no doubt attracted her attention, she said : ‘I have put my spectacles on to try to see you.’”

The conversation turned on Lamartine, and Mme. Récamier defended him. We must remember that in 1847, when Lamartine had published that *Histoire des Girondins* which caused such a sensation, and prepared people’s minds for the coming of the Republic, Mme. Récamier had taken his side. “I think,” she had said to Legouvé, “that with the exception of a little too much colour in certain descriptive parts of this huge historical picture, it is the most useful book that has appeared for preparing the final opinion with regard to the things and men of the Revolution, for it is the book in which there is the most justice for the oppressors and the most pity for the victims.” And when astonishment and indignation were expressed at this criticism, Mme. Récamier replied defending the work most animatedly.⁵

¹ *Les années de retraite de M. Guizot*, p. 121.

² *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 566.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 504. ⁴ Daniel Stern, *Mes souvenirs*, p. 357 and following.

⁵ Lamartine, *Cours de littérature*, IX, p. 223 and following.

At present she was thinking of nothing else but watching over the works and the memory of her great friend who had passed away. The task was a heavy one. Louis de Loménie had published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* his two fine, important studies devoted to the *Mémoires*. From the very year 1848, besides Ampère's report at the French Academy, biographies of Chateaubriand began to appear.¹ But difficulties soon arose. Catholics were already abandoning the school of the *Génie du Christianisme* and Ballanche's principles.² The publication of the *Mémoires* began in *La Presse* as soon as legal formalities allowed of this.³ It was a commercial affair much more than a literary enterprise. The publication rights had been paid—ninety-six thousand francs (£3,840). *La Presse* intended, therefore, at least to make that amount by the venture. Charles Monselet, the author of the *Trois Gendarmes*, supplied a kind of introduction.⁴ On the 21st of October, the first instalment was given to the public. It took nearly two years, from October 21st, 1848, to July 3rd, 1850, for the entire work to be brought out.

The publication of these *Mémoires* gave rise to complications of all kinds, and almost to scandals. Families intervened asking for things to be omitted. Others would no doubt have preferred adding a few passages in their own honour. The Duc de Broglie and Guizot⁵ took steps to endeavour to prevent the publication of the tenth book. There was a "transaction" of some kind. The Duc de Noailles probably intervened in order to obtain the omission of the famous passage about Mme. de Mouchy. By a codicil dated February 22nd, 1845,⁶ Chateaubriand had appointed four persons, Mandaroux-Vertamy, Hyde de Neuville, Louis de Chateaubriand, and the Duc de Lévis, to watch over the carrying out of the contract with the joint stock company. He had settled that his unpublished works should be printed from the copy bearing at the beginning and end of each volume the date of February 25th, 1845 (now known as the

¹ See at the Bibliothèque Nationale, *Catalogue de l'histoire de France*, Vol. IX. ² Ozanam, *Lettres*, II, pp. 266, 270, 271, and 274.

³ Biré, *Introduction to the Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, p. xiii, and following. ⁴ Reproduced later in *Portr. après décès*, pp. 63 to 127.

⁵ Pailhès, *Du nouveau sur Joubert*, p. 458.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 457-458.

Champion copy). All the other copies were to be burnt. The executors, it seems, modified more than one passage of the definitive manuscript.¹

"This took place," confesses a newspaper, "in arranging certain books and in the interpretation of certain passages."² Ampère and Lenormant were charged with the mission of examining the manuscripts and signing the final proofs. From time to time there were protests. *Le Corsaire* of March 10th, 1849, pointed out that in *La Presse* of November 21st, 1848, the celebrated parallel between Washington and Bonaparte, which had been published in the *Globe* of 1827, appeared to have been altered and curtailed. *La Presse* exonerated itself by declaring that the passage had been handed in under its present form by the executors of the author.³

In October, 1848, Sainte-Beuve left France for Belgium. He was to give that course of lectures at Liège which resulted in the publication of his two volumes, *Chateaubriand et son groupe*. He took advantage, as everyone knows, of his independence for criticizing the dead lion freely. Mme. Récamier's influence, as he declares himself,⁴ had "paralyzed him on this point ever since 1834." He had yielded, but not without some resistance, and in some cases he had "refused absolutely to speak to the public about certain of the master's works."⁵ "Even when yielding," he writes, "I managed to insinuate reserves, as, for instance, when I spoke of his last work on Rancé. I compared myself quietly to the grasshopper compelled to sing in the lion's mouth." This time, being away from Mme. Récamier, the critic took back his entire liberty.

As a matter of fact, all these little affairs were accompanied by disagreeable and ugly details. Mme. Récamier preferred not to see anything more of these ambitious and selfish disputes. The only thing for her to do now was to die. Cholera was raging in Paris in 1849, and the Rue de Sèvres

¹ Pailhès, *Du nouveau sur Joubert*, p. 460.

² *Ibid.*

³ Jules Troubat, *Une page contestée des Mémoires. Revue bleue* of February 24th, 1900.

⁴ *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, I, p. 17.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

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was not spared by the epidemic.¹ At Easter, Mme. Récamier went to stay with her niece at the Library. Alexis de Saint-Priest went to see her there, in order to submit to her his eulogy of Ballanche. She was taken suddenly ill, and was obliged to stay in bed. She died on the 11th of May, 1849, at ten in the morning.²

The full details about Mme. Récamier's death are given in a letter from Paul David to M. Phil. Delphin, of Lyons.³

"Mme. Récamier," he writes, "after some rather violent attacks of neuralgia, had been much better for a few days. On Thursday I had been with her from ten in the morning till half-past three, and when I went out for a little fresh air I left her perfectly well. At four o'clock when I returned I found her in bed and very unwell. She had been suddenly seized with a violent attack of cholera, and all the efforts of the doctors were in vain. They were not able to bring about a reaction or to stop the pain, which for twelve mortal hours was atrocious. Complete tranquillity followed, and after six hours and a half, during which there was no sign of suffering, she passed away. She received all the consolations of religion, for which she asked from the first. She was perfectly conscious to the very last. A few hours before her death an expression of angelic serenity came over her face, and this remained when she was placed in her coffin. Her features had recovered their former purity, and she was truly beautiful."

¹ *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 567 and following. Compare *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 349. See also *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* of June 1st, 1869. Monselet, *Portr. après décès*, pp. 131-132.

² Mme. Récamier's certificate of death was as follows : "Saturday, May 10th, 1849, 9 a.m. Certificate of death of Jeanne Françoise Julie Adélaïde Bernard, lady of independent means, aged 71 years, born at Lyons (Rhône). Died yesterday morning at 10.30 at her residence, Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, No. 14. Widow of Jacques Rose Récamier. Witnesses : Charles Lenormant, member of the Institute, aged 47, living in the same house, great-nephew of the deceased, and Pierre Marie Anatole Chabouillet, assistant custodian of the Bibliothèque Nationale, aged 39, living in the same house, who have signed, together with us, Prosper Parfait Goubaux, deputy-mayor of the second department of Paris, after reading this and after the death being declared according to the law. Signed : Lenormant, Chabouillet, Goubaux." (Archives of the Seine. Civil state proved. Communicated by M. Lazard.—The funeral took place on May 13th ; the religious ceremony was celebrated in the church of Notre Dame des Victoires. (*Débats*, May 12th, 1849.)

³ Dated May 13th, 1849. Communicated by Mme. Faure-Delphin.

In a will written by herself on the 15th of September, 1842,¹ Mme. Récamier asked to be buried in the Montmartre Cemetery, near to her mother's tomb, at the foot of the cedar she had had planted. She appointed her adopted daughter, Mme. Lenormant, her residuary legatee. "As my fortune is very limited," she says, "I can only leave simple keepsakes to my family and to my friends." The most important paragraph of the will, so unfortunately mutilated, runs as follows: "I leave to MM. Ballanche, Paul David,² and Ampère sums of which I can dispose, the capital of which I leave to Mme. Lenormant; they will inherit this income from each other, and the capital can only be used by Mme. Lenormant on the death of the last of them. They will see, I hope, in this souvenir my deep gratitude for the attentions with which they have embellished my life."

The picture of Corinne was to be given to the Lyons Museum in the name of Mme. Récamier and of Ballanche.³ "I desire," she added, "that it should be stated in this donation that the picture was ordered from Gérard and given to me by his Royal Highness, Prince Augustus of Prussia." The Saint-Malo Museum received the bas-relief of the *Martyrs*, by Tenerani.

Mme. Lenormant was entrusted with the carrying out of various details. "I trust to her entirely," wrote Mme. Récamier, "for attending to anything I may have forgotten. She will think of me and of her uncle, and will keep our memory fresh in the hearts of her children. It will be sweet to her to think of all the happiness she has contributed to my life by her affection and her virtues." In another clause Mme. Récamier bequeathed to J. J. Ampère the letters that he had written to her.⁴

¹ This will, written on four small pages of blue letter paper, has been bound in the collection of letters to Mme. Lenormant. The first line was taken off with the cutting of the pages; Mme. Récamier must have summed up in that her religious convictions. It is easy to reconstitute the end of the first line, which joined to the beginning of the second one reads thus: "in which I was born."

² About P. David see L. de Loménie's article in *L'ami de la religion* of September 25th, 1860.

³ Confirmed by a letter from Ch. Lenormant to the Mayor of Lyons (*City of Lyons Arch. mun., Beaux-Arts*). The letter is dated June 28th, 1849.

⁴ *Corr. des Ampère*, I, p. 207.

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Mme. Récamier is buried in the Montmartre Cemetery (Section 30, Line 2, No. 43 of the Avenue de la Croix). The monument, which is very simple, is surmounted by a cross and by the inscription "*O crux, ave, spes unica.*" On another side it bears the following indications: "In this tomb are buried the mortal remains of Jeanne-Françoise-Julie-Adélaïde Récamier, *née* Bernard; Jacques-Rose Récamier, her husband; Jean Bernard, her father; Marie-Julie Matton, her mother; and Pierre-Simon Ballanche, her friend. Pray for them." On another side: "Marie-Julie Bernard, *née* Matton, January 21st, 1807; Jean Bernard, March 19th, 1828; Jacques-Rose Récamier, April 19th, 1830; Pierre-Simon Ballanche, June 12th, 1847; Jeanne-Françoise-Julie-Adélaïde Récamier, *née* Bernard, May 11th, 1849." Round the foot of the monument is the inscription: "*Ecce quam bonum/habitate fratres/in unum. Ps. cxxxii.*" A few steps away the two Ampères are buried in the same tomb.

Mme. Récamier's death did not cause much sensation in the world. Political events attracted all attention. The papers, nevertheless, published some notices.¹

John Lemoinne, who the year previously, in a study of Chateaubriand,² had congratulated Mme. Récamier on her care for the "Homer of melancholy," devoted to her on the 1st of July, 1849, an article of the most charming delicacy and the most exquisite reserve. He informed the public that M^{me}. Récamier had given instructions that her confidences should be burnt. He approved the sentiment of reserve which had inspired her with this decision, and was delighted at this last proceeding of a woman who had always been discreet and more decorous even than she was fascinating. "In the midst of the stir and brilliancy of the world," he added, "she kept that individual grace, that secret charm that the poet gives to the 'roses that blush unseen.' She never sought for celebrity except for others, and never obtained it herself except without desiring it and unconsciously. A great artist of last century, Diderot, said, 'Why

¹ *Moniteur universel*, May 13th, 1849; *Observateur de Genève*, May 15th, *Revue britannique*, 1849, II, pp. 227 and 228; *Journal des Débats*, May 12th, 1849; and the *Feuilleton*, May 14th. ² July 13th, 1848.

do people always speak of fine old men and never of fine old women?" Mme. Récamier gave the lie to that sentence, or rather her name could never be associated with the idea of old age." No one has ever written of Mme. Récamier so well as John Lemoinne.

On the 22nd of June, 1849, Mme. Desbordes-Valmore wrote to her intimate friend, Frédéric Lepeytre. "Adieu to Mme. Récamier," she said; "to her grace and her gentle hands, which were so courageous, too, in drawing to herself and sustaining those who were suffering the most. The loss of M. de Chateaubriand uprooted her from earth. Her beautiful eyes had become blind, and this creature, judged as frivolous because she smiled even through her tears, wanted to die. She told me so in face of the places left empty by Ballanche and the grave René. What solitude for me in that nook formerly so full of life, so good, so safe! Adieu!"¹ Ampère was greatly distressed by Mme. Récamier's death, although this has very wrongly been doubted.² On the 18th of May, whilst feeling the first shock of this grief, he wrote as follows to Barante: "This affection had filled my life for thirty years; it was indeed my whole life. It was for me all that there is most sure and most sweet of family happiness. It was the charm of a most exquisite society. It was more than all that—it was she herself, the unique, incomparable person whom we knew and whom we loved."³ The Comte de Sainte-Aulaire, who after an interval of eighteen years had returned to Juliette, which made their intercourse date back fifty-four years, expressed himself as very much affected by her loss.⁴ The Duchesse de Sagan, also, from afar shared Barante's deep and sincere grief.⁵ Alone, perhaps, of all Prosper's friends, the Comte Alexis de Saint-Priest, out of hatred for Chateaubriand, did not wait the time which

¹ Quoted by A. Pougin, *La Jeunesse de Mme. Desbordes-Valmore*, p. 125. "Madame R. was certainly not of the race of persons that you very rightly regret, of Madame Guizot and of Madame de Lasteyrie." X. Doudan, *Mélanges et lettres*, II, p. 214. The letter is dated August 5th, 1849.

² See Sainte-Beuve, *Nouveaux Lundis*, XIII, pp. 242, 243, 248; Ampère's will in *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 391; L. de Loménie's speech at Ampère's grave, *Débats*, April 3rd, 1864.

³ *Souv. du baron de Barante*, VII, pp. 444-445.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 447. See too VIII, p. 54.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

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common decency prescribes before beginning to jeer at Mme. Récamier's *salon*.¹ A few years later, Prosper de Barante was delighted to meet with his friend again in the *Souvenirs* published by her, and to be reminded of what he had known so well himself, namely, "that coquetry which went beyond friendship without arriving as far as love."²

¹ See his letter of December 8th, 1849. *Souv. du baron de Barante*, VII, p. 489.

² *Souv. du baron de Barante*, VIII, p. 258; letter to Guizot.

CHAPTER XXVI

VARIOUS CRITICISMS OF MADAME RÉCAMIER

CONCLUSION

Criticisms which are too severe : Princess Metternich, Michelet, the Goncourts, Jules Soury.—Those who have repented : Philarète, Chasles, Mérimée.—An unpublished portrait by Chateaubriand ; an article by Goethe.—Sainte-Beuve's the best criticism.—Mme. Récamier's special destiny.—Her kindness.—Her coquetry.—Was she intelligent ?

MME. RÉCAMIER has been diversely criticized, and very severely by some persons. In the spiteful assault made on her, women have been very much to the fore. It is scarcely worth while to dwell much on Mme. Ancelot's opinion, but that of Mme. de Metternich is more curious. In 1831, Prince de Metternich married for his third wife the Comtesse Mélanie de Zichy-Ferraris. Ever since the year 1820, the Comtesse had been in the habit of noting in her diary her daily impressions. She frequented in Vienna what is called high society and, like Mme. Récamier, her own *salon* had great influence. Now, in the *Journal de la Princesse Mélanie*, December 19th, 1831, we read some rather strong remarks with regard to the Duchesse d' Abrantès and Mme. Récamier. Juliette is spoken of as a “simpleton,” who towards the close of her life gave herself up to piety.¹ And the Princesse affirms that she knows many details about her which unfortunately could not be written.

Michelet would not let his friends take him to the Abbaye. He feared for his unfettered genius the “vapid atmosphere” of drawing-rooms, and in spite of the persuasions of Ballanche

¹ *Mémoires de Metternich*, V, p. 115.

and Lamartine, he persisted in his obstinacy. "I felt perfectly sure," he wrote, "that such a centre, where all was arranged and conventional, would have civilized me too much. I had only one force, my untouched freshness of opinion and the freedom of an art that was my own and new."¹ Clément de Ris compared the Abbaye to a *table d'hôte*; Cuvillier-Fleury only saw in Mme. Récamier a comedian and a coquette.² Baron de Trémont detested her as much as he hated Mme. Geoffrin; in Arsène Houssaye's opinion she was merely a Célimène dressed up; and the Goncourts did their utmost to cover this "Madonna of conversation" with ridicule.³

Jules Soury did not believe in Mme. Récamier's kind-heartedness. In his interpretation of her character he gives her sentiments somewhat similar to those of Nero:⁴ "She did not fail to find a certain pleasure in the woes and the cruel wounds caused by her beauty." And in a phrase of Juliette's to Camille Jordan, which can only be understood accompanied by a smile, he draws conclusions in the most dogmatic way with regard to the "evil instincts" and "immodesty" of Mme. Récamier. The brutality of this judgment does not do credit to the usual shrewdness of this critic. According to this, a woman's slightest coquetry is a crime, and Célimène herself a monster. The unreasonableness is strange of judging Mme. Récamier more severely than those who, after having fallen in love with her, and after being rejected but not repulsed by her, returned to her, their ill-will melted by the warmth of her friendship. Jules Soury's error is all the more curious because he believes in the "peculiar case" of Mme. Récamier,⁵ and he ought, therefore, to have excused the apparent anomalies of her conduct. All the words in this portrait ring false.⁶ All these violences are disconcerting.

Others, who at first were very hard on Juliette, appeared later on to repent.

Philarète Chasles knew Mme. Lenormant, and had seen

¹ *Histoire de France*, preface of 1869,

² *Posthumes et revenants*, p. 276 and following.

³ *Journal*, II, p. 228, and I, p. 85.

⁴ *Portr. de femmes*, more particularly pp. 331 and 332.

⁵ See his page 328.

⁶ Example, "unbridled in her caprices," p. 332.

Mme. Récamier a few times. "Their *salons* were most wearisome ;" he writes, "through concentrated coquetry and insipidness everyone fell into platitudes."¹ He altered his mind, however, later on, and recognized that "the monarchic, religious, and elegantly stiff formality which reigned at the Abbaye was corrected by the simple character of its mistress." He declared that Mme. Récamier never "posed," that she had no evil passion, that "she was a real white rose with a tinge of delicate carnation," that she had a tender soul, keen intelligence, and that she kept out of the intrigues that were being concocted around her. This testimony is, taken altogether, more of a eulogy than a criticism. Chasles had been introduced to the Abbaye by Chateaubriand "old and deaf," consequently he had only seen the *salon* on its decline. He remembered Mme. Récamier, nevertheless, as an agreeable woman whose disinterestedness was most touching.

Mérimée, too, appears to have regretted his severity about Mme. Récamier. In a letter written in 1857, he explains his attitude with regard to her *à propos* of Ampère.² "Ampère's misfortune, or rather his good fortune," he writes, "was that all his projecting and original corners were smoothed for him by a woman whom he loved and whom I could never endure. You no doubt knew Mme. Récamier. I have no other reproach to make her than that she never had any of those vigorous hatreds that one should have when necessary. She found everything satisfactory, or at any rate praised everybody. She drew you aside and told you that you were a genius. That, and the saint-worship which everyone in the house professed for the most egotistical man of the century, made me dislike her. I think she was really good-hearted in spite of that, and I believe I was unjust as far as she was concerned. But first impressions are not forgotten." As a matter of fact, the criticism is harder on Chateaubriand than

¹ *Mémoires*, I, p. 318.

² *Une correspondance inédite*, p. 93. In a letter of July 26th, 1857, there is another criticism : "I think her influence was above all due to her resignation. She was always ready to put up with the personality of all the lions. She was never bored, or at any rate never appeared to be so. Men constantly need to be wound up again like clocks. From time to time we have fits of exhaustion, melancholy, or worries, and compliments generally help us in recovering from all this." *Ibid.*, p. 103.

on his friend. Saint-worship for anyone who, like Mérimée, is not a theologian is a servile worship. We have had more than one opportunity of seeing that, with regard to Chateaubriand, Mme. Récamier neither sacrificed her dignity nor her independence.

It cannot be denied, on the other hand, that Mme. Récamier at times had been over-enthusiastic. As we have seen, no woman was ever more flattered and extolled. Her fame was at times celebrated with a poetic enthusiasm in the worst possible taste. It seems as though this was the case with regard to Monselet.¹ In certain criticisms we must remember that there was gratitude to be taken into account; in others, politeness.² Perhaps even what Chateaubriand and Goethe wrote about her should not be taken too literally, although they write in fairly moderate terms.

In 1823, in his *Biographie de Mme. Récamier*,³ Ballanche transcribed an unpublished sketch of Juliette by Chateaubriand:

“Léonie is tall; her figure is charming. Léonie is beautiful. What gives her a rare expression of beauty is that oval line which one only sees in Raphael’s heads, and which hitherto might have been thought to be ideal. There is perfect harmony in all Léonie’s features. They express gentleness, refinement, and kindness. Léonie’s mind and character are distinguished by the same traits as her beauty; but what lends a special charm to her person is a piquant wit and a romantic imagination, in contrast with her natural tranquillity. Sometimes her words are passionate, whilst her expression is timid and naïve. The double charm is to be found in her of the maiden and the loving woman. She seduces like Venus, and inspires like the Muse. One falls at her feet in love with her, and one is held there by respect.”

On the 3rd of January, 1845, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz sent Mme. Récamier Goethe’s portrait of her.

¹ *Portr. après décès*, p. 133.

² The most interesting opinions about Mme. Récamier are those of Villemain, article quoted, p. 211; Guizot, article quoted, p. 531 and following; Carné, article quoted, p. 1101; E. Scherer, *Études*, V, p. 90; A. Barbier, *Souvenirs personnels*, p. 313; J. Lemoinne, *Débats*, October 27th, 1859; Th. Gautier, *Portraits contemporains*, p. 19; de Vogüé, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 15th, 1892, pp. 456 and 457.

³ Pp. 251 and 252.

"As I do not know," he says in the postscript, "whether you are acquainted with the lines I enclose, I could not resist sending them. They are from the pen of our famous Goethe, written at a time when your enemies, not being able to forgive either your noble conduct or your beauty, were endeavouring to avenge themselves by slandering your intellectual faculties. I feel, alas, that my translation is very bad, but, as you know that what is perfectly well written is indifferent when translated in another language, I venture to hope that you will not refuse me the indulgence for which I ask."¹

The Grand Duke translated as follows the article he attributed to Goethe :

"Those who are capable of believing that the charm of Mme. Récamier's mind is only the effect of her close intercourse with all that is most distinguished, that it is only the reflection of a neighbouring sun, the perfume of some other flower—such people have never approached Mme. Récamier. Without ever publishing a book, perhaps even without ever penning any literary work, this remarkable woman has exercised the greatest influence over two of the best authors. This influence, so little sought for, comes from the capacity for loving talent, for comprehending it, having the soul fired by it and sharing in its success. Those who know how ideas grow when developed near an intelligence that is remarkable, and that half one's eloquence is drawn from the eyes of those who are listening, such people will not be astonished at the passionate friendship of Chateaubriand and Casimir² for this woman, whom they followed abroad and to whom they were never more devoted than during the time of her misfortunes. There are souls which sympathize with all elevated ideas, with all the beautiful productions of the imagination. One would like to do all the good deeds possible in order to be able to confide them to such souls and to enjoy the happiness of talking of them with such confidants! This is the great secret of Mme. Récamier's influence."

Taken altogether, it is Sainte-Beuve who has spoken of her

¹ Letters from foreigners, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Benjamin?

better than anyone else, and who has noted her qualities and her faults with the greatest shrewdness. It is marvellous to see how characteristic and sure the criticisms of the author of the *Lundis* are about all the persons he frequented. After reading him you go back to documents and to the original sources of things. You devote years of research to subjects that he has only touched lightly on his way; to what he knew you add unpublished correspondence, papers recently published; and all this effort enables you to express, in a mediocre way, what ten pages of his had already settled. About Benjamin Constant, Ballanche, Mme. de Staél, Chateaubriand, Sainte-Beuve has been completed; he has scarcely been contradicted, although it may appear that he has. It was he who told the real truth about Mme. Récamier. The Abbaye attracted and repelled by turns. He went there out of curiosity; he kept away out of anger with himself, fearing to lose some of his independence. Mme. Récamier obtained all the more, because she asked for so little. Sainte-Beuve felt that, and when he had to criticize her he did it with the most delicate shades. He noted her gestures, her contradictions, her weaknesses. He saw in her a true woman; at certain times he understood that she had suffered. Whilst others formed their opinion about her the moment they saw her, he wanted to know her story and all her life in order to speak of her. He realized that certain souls need to be loved, and that gives them the desire to please. Where others, the psychologists, the "strong ones" like Mérimée, only saw scheming he felt something deeper. One cannot understand Mme. Récamier if one does not pity her a little. Sainte-Beuve pitied her. He saw her faults just as she saw those of her friends. He knew better than anyone the disagreeableness of that perpetual lukewarmness in which she kept her familiar friends, but for the sake of her kindness he forgave her everything. And so it happens that a man, who was perhaps only intelligent, has given us the most animated, lifelike, and touching portrait of Mme. Récamier and the one that is most worthy of her.

In order to arrive at this result he began over again several times, for this was his method. Mme. Récamier did not

belong to any of those categories in which professional psychologists are accustomed to class women. M. Récamier, who was not wanting in intelligence, nor above all in experience, wrote to her in 1807, when she was at Coppet, as follows :

“ I so often say to myself, what am I to do ? What is the kind of life suitable for this interesting friend ? I found something approaching the reply to my question in one of the chapters of *Corinne*. ‘ You will hurt me dreadfully,’ it says, ‘ by trying to judge my character according to those great ordinary divisions for which there are ready-made maxims. I suffer, I enjoy, and I feel in my own way, and it is me myself that anyone must observe, in order to influence my happiness.’ That is precisely your case, as these great divisions for which there are ready-made maxims would never suit you. You would be forcing nature if you tried to subordinate yourself to them, and you would be always out of your element, even during the momentary impulse which you might be obeying. Some special divisions must be made for you, and some maxims invented.”¹

Récamier only forgot one detail, and that was that he was in a great measure responsible for the character of the “ interesting friend.” All the apparent contradictions in Mme. Récamier came from her misfortune in not having been able to find the support of a deep and durable affection. Récamier was agreeable, almost fascinating, but very fickle. In 1811, his wife, who was at Angervilliers, at the house of Mme. de Catellan, wrote to him that she had the blues. In his reply he said : “ For my part, I am going to drive away all melancholy. We are going, your papa . . . to dine at the *Feu Sacré de la Vestale* on the Boulevard Neuf, near the Jardin des Plantes.”² We can imagine a wife’s discouragement on receiving no other consolation in her moments of trouble, hesitation, and unrest. The same year Juliette was banished. She was thinking of leaving Châlons for Lyons. “ Everyone,” wrote her husband, “ has his own tastes, his likings, his way of looking at things, and our feelings and our ideas cannot be

¹ Letter of July 19th, 1807, in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection.

² Letter of May 21st [1811], in M. Ch. de Loménié’s collection.

influenced on such points, so that we must obey our natural impulse. It seems to me that if I were to be exiled I should choose Normandy, where there are the most horses, so that I could see more and do more horse-dealing. That would certainly not be an attraction to you, but you will find some other."¹ That was all. It was simply delicious in its thoughtlessness and unconscious egoism. It is laughable, but we may be sure that Juliette more often felt inclined to weep.

And yet this wife, who might have been excused if she had sought elsewhere substantial compensations, maintained all her life long that harmonious manner, that balance which we have admired. When only a mere child she had been duped into marriage, and she had very quickly been aware of this. For some time social distractions had sufficed for her. She had been dazzled by fêtes and surfeited with homage. When her reason awoke, an agreeable, pleasant, and gracious reason, she had flung herself into that passionate friendship with Mme. de Staél. Her inclination did not mislead her. Once in her life it had seemed that she was going to know that simple but deep happiness for which every woman longs. She believed herself free, because she believed what had been said to her; but, when she had made up her mind and was prepared to run the risk, an appeal was made to her kind heart, and she was asked to sacrifice herself once more to the conventionalities of society or to the interest of another. She resigned herself sorrowfully to her fate. How was it possible that these successive efforts and mutilations should leave no trace in her? In the facility with which Mme. Récamier, after this, accepted homage, there was at bottom a great deal of contempt. It is said that she caused a great deal of suffering, and certainly she did reject, elude, and make fools of men, but men had made her suffer much more. When once again she did give herself entirely, her whole heart and soul at any rate was again duped, duped by the greatest love-comedian of the century. Finally came definitive resignation, the burial of all her hopes, and during the years which remained to her we must admire her for having been able, without any bitterness, rancour, or ill-will, to care for those grown-up children, whose

¹ Letter of September 28th, 1811, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

faults and caprices she respected with the most touching sentiment.

The basis of her character was kind-heartedness. There is no subject which lends itself so easily to jesting. The rows of chairs, the hot-house, the parody of the Academy, the little by-play, the temple of Chateaubriand. . . . As a matter of fact, though, there is nothing laughable in it. “In trying to play the angel, one is apt to play the fool,” and people sometimes become imbecile in trying to avoid being duped. This woman, who had only average faculties, never missed an opportunity of using them in the service of what she thought would be for someone’s good. In 1812, the Comtesse de Boigne wrote her the following letter :¹

“ You are the least forgotten person of anyone, and it is because you are so agreeable, so pretty, and charming ; it is because you are kind, sweet, easy to get on with, that everyone remembers you in a way that is agreeable and which flatters his own self-esteem and his heart even perhaps, if he has one. This is because your sweet, natural, charming kindness has discovered the secret of persuading everyone that his fate is not indifferent to you. You know how much I adore this charm of kindness, which I have never found in another woman. I have told you this a hundred times and thought it a thousand times—namely, that it is your kindness which makes you so fascinating. Perhaps I am the only person who has ventured to say this, as it seems so odd to praise the kindness of the most beautiful woman in Europe. Well, I am persuaded that, if it were possible to define the influence that you exercise, this same kindness would have more power than all the other advantages, more brilliant no doubt, but to which it adds more force. And so, Madame, it is because you are kind that you have turned so many heads and made so many unfortunate men desperate. They have no idea of this, but it is nevertheless true.”

We now see what we must think of a coquetry about which there has been so much discussion. A coquette she was, undoubtedly and fortunately. Men made her coquettish, and were then surprised to find her so. This was her sole protection,

¹ Letter of January 9th, 1812, in M. Ch. de Loménie’s collection.

and she made use of it well. She was coquettish with Lucien Bonaparte, and it was more than he deserved. She was coquettish with Benjamin Constant, but in this case the victim was not one we can pity long. But this coquetry did not deaden her sensibility. We have only to recall the affair with Prince Augustus of Prussia and the drama, quite as moving, which followed her *liaison* with Chateaubriand. The Comtesse de Boigne used to rebuke her about her affability to all her admirers, whether they were admirers of an evening or of a year. One day, after obtaining from her a solemn promise, she met her at a *soirée*, escorted by the Duke of Wellington. "A fine sequel!" said Mme. de Boigne to her as she passed by. Juliette gave a merry laugh, took her friend's arm familiarly and returned to the ball-room with her, leaving the Duke somewhat abashed.¹ The troubles she caused were neither very lasting nor very deep. Even Augustus of Prussia consoled himself. Men were more hurt in their pride than in their love. The pain was more cruel, perhaps, but certainly less grave.

The question is with all this whether she was intelligent. At any rate, she was intelligent enough not to leave to posterity ten volumes of *Mémoires*. She wrote some notes, and Chateaubriand, who read them, declared gallantly that he had made use of them.² She did not allow him, though, to quote any fragments, and she gave orders that all should be burnt after her death. Those we have come across were only preserved by chance. Towards 1860, some of the newspapers were triumphant at being able to publish some letters from her, the orthography and style of which were fantastic.³ As a matter of fact, Mme. Récamier's letters are rare. She wrote very little, and never attempted any special style. She was not ridiculous enough to imitate anyone. As samples of her correspondence we give a few letters to her faithful Paul David. It was to him that she always wrote most freely. These letters were written during a journey.

¹ According to a letter from Mme. de Boigne to Mme. Ch. Lenormant, dated September 18th, 1859, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² Chateaubriand, *M.O.T.*, IV, p. 373.

³ See the *Correspondance littéraire* of May 10th, 1860.

"CONSTANCE, August 21st [1832].¹

"I have just arrived, my dear Paul. Yesterday and to-day I thought I should die. I had nervous attacks and fits of choking, which gave me the agreeable sensation of suffocation. I hope that the rest will do me good. On arriving here I found a letter from M. de Chat, who is at Lugano, and who is coming here. I also found one from Ballanche, which did me a great deal of good, as he tells me that the improvement continues."²

[CONSTANCE] "Friday [August 2 (?), 1832].³

"I cannot tell you, my dear Paul, how touched I was by your letter. I can only write a few hurried lines. I am better, but I am now in for visits. I have been received here in the most charming way, and you know how touched I am by kindness. Let me trust to your exactitude for doing something for me. I want to have *La Fée aux miettes*.⁴ I have been praising it here, and it has made people want to read it, so I promised to ask you for it. Adieu, adieu; they are waiting for me. Tell me about yourself. I am delighted to have good news about M. Ballanche's health."⁵

"WOLFSBERG, September 2nd, evening.

"Only imagine, my dear Paul, that I am still waiting for my luggage, and that for the last ten days I have been paying and receiving visits in my old black dress and travelling hat. I beseech you to inquire about it and to take the necessary steps so that I may receive it. This delay is all the more extraordinary as up to now everyone has received things very regularly from Paris, so that I am told that some of the customs formalities must have been forgotten. Anyhow, you can understand the inconvenience of my situation. I am bearing it philosophically, but Fanny cannot reconcile herself

¹ Post-mark.

² Letters to Paul David, No. 47, unsigned, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

³ Post-mark.

⁴ Novel by Ch. Nodier, Paris, Renduel, 1832, in-8.

⁵ Letters to Paul David, No. 48, unsigned, in M. Ch. de Loménié's collection.

to seeing me receive Queen Hortense in my old dress. You cannot imagine what graciousness and what attentions I meet with. I am quite embarrassed by it all. M. de Chateaubriand stayed four days here—two at Constance and two at Wolfsberg, where we are installed. Is it true that the Duchesse d'Abmantès is preparing to start? Tell her that I should be delighted, and that I hope she can use my carriage. I only dread a few extra pages of the *Mémoires*. The Duchesse de Saint-Leu will pose. . . .”¹

“WOLFSBERG, September 12th.

“Thank you, dear Paul, for your good, kind letters. M. Ballanche is quite right not to communicate mine. I always write for one person alone and if, when writing to one, I know that I shall be read by three or four persons, I lose the pleasure of the *tête-à-tête* which I otherwise enjoy. Mme. de Chat. arrived at Lucerne, and has left with M. de Chateaubriand to go to Geneva, where they intend spending the winter. We shall see them for a few days before returning to Paris, where I hope we shall all meet towards the end of October.”²

“METZ, Sunday, 30th [August?].

“What a journey, my dear Paul! I am only at Metz. I was obliged to stop twice, and am starting so late to-day that I can only arrive at Verdun. The next day I shall be at Châlons, which is so full of memories for me. I shall stop at Montmirail to have news of that excellent Duc de Doudeauville, and shall then arrive in Paris like a poor carrier-pigeon. You can imagine with what happiness I am thinking of it, but I shall not find my dear Adèle there yet. I have not seen her for so long that the thought of her absence saddens my return. Adieu, my dear Paul; you have been so perfect and so exact that you have considerably eased the worries of this journey for me. You know how to look after your friends when they are away as well as when they are near you.

¹ Letters to Paul David, No. 49, unsigned, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² *Ibid.*, No. 50, unsigned, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

Distribute my kind remembrances, and announce my return to those who are expecting me. M. Lenormant did me a real service in telling me of M. Ampère's success. M. Ballanche is so well off at Mme. d'Hautefeuille's that I am sure it is the place that is best for him just now, and I do not want to be a pretext for his return. Tell him this, and that I think of paying him a visit as soon as I am a little rested.”¹

As will be seen, all this is very simple and natural, with great common sense, a note of deep feeling, and occasionally a touch of mischief. We hope to have proved that if Mme. Récamier occupied a place in the literary history of the nineteenth century, she did not seek for that honour with much scheming. Her *salon* was nothing like the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and she must not even be compared with Mme. Geoffrin, who nevertheless resembled Mme. Récamier in more than one way. She cannot be compared with anyone. She did naturally, and with kindness and grace, what it would be difficult to try to recommence. It is *à propos* of her that we ought to think of Sainte-Beuve's exquisite speech: “A public man, dead or living, may be judged with some hardness, but it seems to me that a woman, even when dead, if she remained a woman in the essential qualities, is always rather our contemporary.”²

¹ Letters to Paul David, No. 28, unsigned, in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection.

² *Causeries du Lundi*, IV, p. 240.

ICONOGRAPHY

A.—*Busts, Medallions*

1. Canova. Mme. Récamier as Beatrice. (Lyons Museum.)

Artaud, in his notes on Canto X for his edition of Dante's *Purgatory* (2nd edition, Vol. I, Paris, Didot, 1830, pp. 242 and 243), writes: "Canova wished to leave a portrait of Beatrice, such as he imagined her, of that Beatrice whom the poet loved. . . . This time Canova distrusted himself; he was afraid of not expressing eloquently enough all that we should admire in Beatrice. In order to attain, as he said himself, the perfection to be desired, he represented Beatrice with the features of Mme. Récamier, who was then living in Rome. As a matter of fact he thus found perfection in one model, and he certainly could not have found more grace, intelligence, and beauty in one face.

"Since then the Duchesse de Sagan, daughter of the Princesse de Courlande, had the delightful idea of ordering from Agricola, an excellent Roman artist, some pictures representing Dante and Beatrice facing each other, Petrarch and Laura, Tasso and Leonora, etc. Agricola found that he could not do better than paint his Beatrice from the one by Canova, his benefactor. The consequence of this is that all the engravings and busts of Beatrice in Italy now offer the same type, which is in reality the portrait that resembles Mme. Récamier so closely. There are, I believe, in Paris only three or four engravings of Agricola's picture representing Dante and Beatrice. The plate of this was engraved very carefully by Marchetti."

The story is rather more complicated than Artaud tells us. In 1813, Canova modelled two clay busts of Mme. Récamier, the one without anything over her hair and the other with her head partially covered with a veil. "In both busts she was looking upwards." Mme. Récamier was not satisfied with either of them. "I do not know what became of the first bust," writes Mme. Lenormant, "but to the one with the veil Canova added an olive wreath and, when a little later the beautiful Frenchwoman asked him what he had done with her bust, about which she had heard nothing more, he replied: 'As you did not like it, I have made a Beatrice of it.' Such is the origin of the beautiful bust of Dante's Beatrice which he executed later on in marble. A copy of it was sent to Mme. Récamier after the death of Canova by his brother, the Abbé, with these lines:

'Sovra candido vel cinta d'oliva,
Donna m'apparve. . . .'

'Ritratto di Giulietta Récamier, modellato di memoria da Canova nel 1813 e poi consacrato in marmo col nome di Beatrice.'" (*Souvenirs et correspondance*, I, pp. 253, 254, 255; II, pp. 156, 157.)

2. Chinard (Joseph). Bust of Mme. Récamier.

This work appears to have been executed in 1812, during Mme. Récamier's stay at Lyons. It has been wrongly attributed to Houdon. Frédéric Masson, in the *Figaro Illustré*, March 1893, describes it as follows : " This bust, in which the hands draw up modestly over the chest a bodice which leaves everything to the imagination, in which the mischievous expression of the nose, the tempting mouth, the lowered eyes, everything, even to the hair dressed most carelessly and with a muslin drapery over it, provokes desire, and does not give the divine sensation of sovereign beauty." This bust, which had belonged to Mme. Récamier, was sold in 1893 to the Marquis de Biron. Chinard first represented Mme. Récamier with the arms covered with a drapery which she was holding over her right breast. The bust was reproduced in terra-cotta, and a copy of it is owned by Mme. Cahen, of Antwerp, and another by Dr. Brillat-Savarin, of Belley. At the request of Mme. Récamier, the artist left out the arms and the drapery (see catalogue of the sale of November 29th, 1893, No. 1). The work is quoted by Brillat-Savarin in his *Physiologie du goût*, I, p. 371 of the second edition. Numberless reproductions and reductions of it have been made.

3. Chinard (Joseph). Small terra-cotta medallion. (Mme. Fr. Lenormant's collection).

We believe that the Marquis de Biron has come across the moulds and prints of this medallion.

4. David d'Angers. Small bas-relief medallion. (M. A. Récamier's collection.)

A good reproduction of this can be seen in J. B. Giraud's *Recueil des objets d'art ayant figuré à l'Exposition rétrospective de Lyon*, 1877, Lyons, Perrin. It appears that this medallion, which was presented by the artist to his model, was executed about the year 1839 (see H. Jouin, *David d'Angers*, p. 488 of Vol. II). It was reproduced by the Collas method. Musée Carnavalet. Prints. Lyons Library, Fonds Coste, No. 14283.

5. Pradier (James). The *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (1860, Vol. V, pp. 369, 370), mentioned among the works of art sold on the death of Charles Lenormant a marble medallion of Mme. Récamier by Pradier. We have not been able to find any trace of it.*B.—Portraits*

1. Bassi (J. B.). Mme. Récamier at St. Albans. (Mme. Fr. Lenormant's collection.)

This picture was sent by Canova, in 1816, to his friend. "The artist has rendered in a very naïve way the magnificent view from this room and the extreme simplicity of the furniture. Mme. Récamier is represented seated near the window, absorbed in a book which she is holding open on her lap." (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 235.) The work is very mediocre.

2. David (Jacques-Louis). Portrait of Mme. Récamier. Sketch. (Louvre Museum, former Salle des États.)

A very well known work, which has been described frequently. (Compare Catalogue des tableaux du musée du Louvre, by Frédéric Villot, p. 98.) The picture was undertaken by David in the year 1800. It was keenly criticized by Mme. Récamier's admirers. The artist was himself dissatisfied with his work ; according to Mme. Lenormant, he stopped in the

middle of it, and gave it up. (See letter in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 95 and following.) According to Delécluze (*Louis David*, pp. 280, 281), David shocked Mme. Récamier by representing her with bare feet, or perhaps he worked too slowly. When Mme. Récamier went to Gérard, David refused to finish her portrait. "Madame," he is reported to have said, "ladies have their caprices and artists have theirs. Allow me to satisfy mine by keeping the portrait in its present state." According to Charles Blanc (*Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, 23, 1867, p. 58), Ingres had worked at Mme. Récamier's portrait, and "had painted, among other things, the bronze candelabra." It was even to avoid a reproach of reminiscence that when painting his portrait of Mme. Senonne he gave up the idea of sketching his model reclining on a lounge of antique shape, as he had first intended that she should pose. (See Louis Bertrand, *La fin du classicism*, p. 318.) The canvas was put up for sale in 1829 by David's heirs, and bought by Ch. Lenormant for £240. A few months later he sold it to the Louvre for the same price. (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 94 to 97.)

3. Dejouinne (François-Louis). Mme. Récamier's cell. (The property of M. Delorme, notary, 11 Rue Auber, Paris.)

The picture was painted in 1826. (See *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 325.) It was lithographed by Aubry-Leconte, who has done a great deal of work from Dejouinne's. Aubry-Leconte exhibited his portrait of Chateaubriand at the Salon of 1824, and his portrait of the Duc de Laval-Montmorency at the Salon of 1833. The lithograph of Dejouinne's picture is in the Carnavalet Museum (Prints).

4. Gérard (François-Pascal-Simon, Baron). Mme. Récamier's portrait. (The property of the City of Paris.)

A well-known work, in which Mme. Récamier is resting languidly on a Directoire sofa, at the threshold of a pseudo-antique vestibule. This portrait was ordered by Mme. Récamier from Gérard when David gave up the idea of finishing his. (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 97.) Shortly after her return to Paris from Coppet in 1807, Mme. Récamier sent it to Prince Augustus. (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 143.) It was by way of thanking him for the present he had made her of Gérard's picture of *Corinne at the Cape of Misène*. Augustus of Prussia had the portrait placed in the gallery of his Berlin palace. (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 150, 151.) In his will he ordered that the work should be returned to Mme. Récamier. This wish was carried out in 1845. The Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, brother of the Queen of Prussia, wrote to Mme. Récamier to ask her for this picture, but she refused to give it up, and it was kept in her family. (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 90, 91.) It was put up for sale in 1860 (*Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, 1860, p. 369), and bought by the City of Paris for £792 (*Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, 1860, 6, p. 51). In 1826, the following work had appeared: *Collection des portraits historiques de M. le baron Gérard, premier peintre du Roi, gravés à l'eau forte par M. Pierre Adam: précédée d'une notice sur le portrait historique* (1st and 2nd numbers; Paris, Urbain Canel). Goethe studied Mme. Récamier's portrait, and considered the engraving coquettish and pleasing. (See Goethe's *Sämtliche Werke*, 30, *Propyläen zur Kunst*, Stuttgart edition, Gebrüder Kröner, p. 246 and following; translated by E. Délerot, *Convers. de Goethe*, p. 475 and following. See also *Corr. de Fr. Gérard*, pp. 241 and 308.) M. Charles de Loménie has an excellent sketch of Gérard's picture; it belonged first to the Duc de Laval, then to the Marquis de Vérac, and afterwards to J. J. Ampère. (See *Le Marquis de Vérac et ses amis*, by the Comte A. A. de Rougé; Paris, Plon, 1890, pp. 352 and 353.)

5. Gérard (Marguerite), in collaboration with Boilly. Portraits, on the same canvas, of Mme. Tallien and Mme. Récamier. (Bordeaux Museum.)

6. Mme. R. wanted to be painted by Jean Guérin. Two notes from her testify to this. In the second one she says : " I should like you, Monsieur, to do the copy you promised me ; and when it is done I should be glad if you would send it to me with the little picture which I should like to have again for a few days. I hope, too, that this copy will be like the first one. You will not forget that the background of sky was perfect." (*Revue des documents historiques*, 6th year, Charavay Frères, éditeurs, pp. 130, 131.)

7. Isabey (Jean-Baptiste, known as Isabey père).

Isabey père painted a portrait of Mme. Récamier when young. It was this portrait that Juliette lent later on to Mme. Ancelot, who was composing her second picture, *Rachel récitant des vers* (see *Un salon de Paris*, p. 71). It was perhaps the water-colour that was in the Salon of 1838, No. 950, with merely the indication, *Portrait de Mme. Récamier*.

8. Ledoux (Mlle. Jeanne Philiberte.) Portrait. (M. Alfred Beurdeley's collection, 79 Rue de Clichy, Paris.)

This portrait is a very pleasing one, but the attributes are doubtful.

9. Lefèvre (Robert). Sketch for a full-length portrait of Mme. Récamier. (Caen Museum.) Mediocre work. (Information contributed by M. G. Menegoz, Curator of Caen Museum.)

10. Massot of Geneva. Portrait of Mme. Récamier. (The property of M. E. Delphin, of Lyons.)

This charming work, which represents Mme. Récamier while still young, must have been executed during one of her visits to Coppet. It is mentioned several times in the letters to Baron Vogt. (M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.) In our opinion it is one of the truest portraits of Mme. Récamier.

11. Morin (Mme. Eulalie). Portrait of Mme. Récamier. (Versailles Museum, Room 174.)

The picture was painted in 1799, and figured in the Salon of that year as a *Portrait de femme dans un paysage*. (Dictionn. Bellier et Auvray.) From that date it was kept by Mme. Récamier, and later on by her family. It was bought in 1895 by the Versailles Museum. (Catalogue of the Récamier sale, No. 95.)

Mme. Récamier is " standing up in the midst of a country landscape. She is wearing a white tunic showing her neck and arms, her cheek resting on her right hand, but the coquettish look in her eyes under the dark curly hair does not accord with the dreamy attitude." (*Le Musée national de Versailles*, by P. de Nolhac et A. Pératé; A. Braun, 1896, p. 286.) The upper lip is shaded with a little down, and the hair is not distinctly brown.

C.—*Miniatures*

1. Augustin (Jean-Baptiste-Jacques). Miniature portrait of Mme. Récamier. Formerly the property of Brillat-Savarin. (See *Physiologie du goût*, 2nd edition, I, p. 371.)

This miniature ornamented a gold box. It was sold by Dr. F. Brillat-Savarin, and we have not been able to find it again. Louis de Loménié, in

his MS. *Souvenirs* (M. Ch. de Loménié's MSS.), describes it as follows : " Mme. Récamier gave Brillat-Savarin a delicious portrait of herself, which I have just seen. It is a miniature on a box. The portrait is by Augustin, and was painted in 1801. It is perhaps the most charming of any I have seen. Mme. Récamier is seated, and dressed in white as usual. She is stooping slightly. Her head is covered with a white muslin drapery, from which a few locks of brown hair escape, falling loosely over the forehead. This veil frames her refined, tender face, with its pensive but smiling expression in the brown eyes, which look like blue ones. The ends of the veil fall on her charming shoulders ; her right arm is bent in search of the left corner of the veil, whilst the elbow of this arm is on her left hand, which is resting against her right hip. The arms are bare almost to the shoulder ; the dress is fastened in the slashings over the arm, and she is wearing white pearls in her ears." The Dictionnaire Bellier de la Chavignerie mentions this work as having been exhibited in the Salon of 1801.

2. Soiron (François, known as Soiron père). Miniature portrait of Mme. Récamier. (Mme. Fr. Lenormant's collection.) The work must be anterior to 1813, as that was the date of Soiron's death.

D.—Engravings, Drawings, Water-Colours

(Only the principal works are indicated.)

1. Adam (Pierre-Michel). Engraving of F. Gérard's large portrait, executed in 1826. (Carnavalet Museum, Prints. Lyons Library, Fonds Coste, No. 14824.)

2. G. S. Bartolozzi. Portrait of Mme. Récamier. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Prints. Carnavalet Museum, Prints.)

This engraving, which is very second-rate, is well known. Mme. Récamier is represented full-face, at the side of some steps, her hair covered with a veil. It is not the work of the celebrated painter and engraver, Francesco Bartolozzi, but of his son, Gaetano Stephan. It was executed in 1802, during the visit to England, from a sketch made by the miniaturist Richard Cosway (1740-1821). The copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale bears the following indications : Ri. Cosway, del. Anthy. Cardon, sculp. The Belgian engraver Antoine, known as Anthony Cardon (1772-1813), was then established in London. It is not known exactly which part of the engraving is due to Bartolozzi and which to Cardon. It has been reproduced often. See in the Print Room at the Bibliothèque Nationale : Charles Silésien, sculp., very second-rate. (Another copy of this at Lyons, Fonds Coste.) Breckhorn, fec. ; very second-rate. Jules Poreau, sc. 1859. (Another copy in the Carnavalet Museum.)

3. Champagne (J.). Drawing by J. Champagne. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Prints. Carnavalet Museum.) From Gérard's portrait. Very second-rate.

4. Delécluze (Etienne-Jean). Mme. Récamier's room. Water-colour. (Mme. Fr. Lenormant's collection.) See *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 325.

5. Deveria (Jacques-Jean-Marie-Achille). Mme. Récamier on her death-bed. Pencil drawing. (The property of M. Ch. de Loménié.) Compare Sainte-Beuve, *Carseries du Lundi*, I, p. 157; *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 572. (Reproduction in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Prints.)

6. Fragonard, jun. (Al. E.). Drawing.

Mme. Récamier seated on a rock surrounded by the sea. A light drapery is wrapped round her, the ends of which are floating in the breeze. (Saint-Malo Museum. Information given by M. E. Macé, Curator of the Museum.)

7. Frilley (Jean-Jacques). Engraving from Gérard's portrait. (Pauquet del.)

8. Gérard (François-Pascal-Simon, Baron). Drawing (belonging to Mme. Fr. Lenormant) executed in 1829.

Mme. Récamier's back is seen, with her face turned towards the left, showing her profile. The neck appears to be rather thick. The hair is all gathered to the back. A fichu is worn in scarf fashion and shows the right shoulder. (See the reproduction in *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts*, July 1st, 1889, p. 49.)

9. Girard, F., sc., 1858. F. Gérard's portrait, 1829. (Bibliothèque Nat., Prints.) It is the engraving of Gérard's drawing, and not his large portrait.

10. Minardi. Portrait of Mme. Récamier. Wash drawing from Gérard's picture. (Lyons Museum, Drawings, No. 112.)

11. Riffaut (Adolphe-Pierre). Engraving for *L'Artiste* from Gérard's large picture. (Carnavalet Museum, Prints.)

12. Pulchérie de Valence, del., Henry, sculp. (Bibliothèque Nationale, Prints.)

Mme. Récamier is represented wearing a low-necked dress edged with fur. Her hair is curled and drawn to the front, and her profile is depicted. This portrait is very mediocre.

13. Mme. Récamier in 1802. Reign of Napoleon I.

Engraving with no signature and very rare. Hair curled and antique costume. (Carnavalet Museum, Prints.) In the same museum, year 11, Parisian costume (425), coloured engraving. Vestal veil and tunic. The person represented is supposed to be Mme. R.

E.—Caricatures

More than one caricature of Mme. Récamier was to be seen in Paris. Kotzebue in his *Souvenirs de Paris* tells an anecdote on this subject. (See Monselet, *Portr. après décès*, p. 151.) Frédéric Masson in the *Figaro Illustré* of March 1893, p. 53, mentions a caricature by Isabey, *Le Petit Coblenz*, in which, "according to a generally believed version, Isabey himself figures, and also Vestris, Murat, Garat, and after Mme. Récamier, Bonaparte, and Talleyrand." "*Le Petit Coblenz*" was a certain part of the boulevard, bounded on the north by the Rue Grange-Batelière and on the south by the Rue du Mont-Blanc, where the aristocratic and anti-republican society met. (See Jules Lemaître, *La journée d'une merveilleuse*.)

M. Itier (Château de Veras, Veynes, Hautes-Alpes) has a pencil drawing of Mme. Récamier at the age of sixteen (profile). According to Chateaubriand, de Chamiso "came across the portrait of Mme. Récamier on porcelain, and the little story of Peter Schlemihl translated into Dutch, in *Kamschatka*." (*M.O.T.*, Vol. IV, pp. 194, 195.) Finally, in 1855 (see *Gaz. des Beaux-Arts* of July 1st) the painter Orchardson exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery for his chief picture : *Mme. Récamier's Salon*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I

WORKS LOST OR UNAVAILABLE

N.B.—We have thought it necessary to make in the first place a list of manuscript or printed works, the existence of which we have found mentioned in various documents, and which would have been valuable to us.

I. Baron Degérando (*Lettres inédites et souv. biogr.*, p. 26, No. 1) certifies that Jean-Jacques Ampère left among his manuscripts some *Souvenirs of the Abbaye-aux-Bois*. Mérimée, on the other hand, says: "I do not think that Ampère left any *Mémoires*. If he did write any I doubt whether we should have learnt anything from them." (Mérimée to the Princesse Julie, *Revue de Paris*, 1894, IV, p. 269.) We have only come across his souvenirs of the journey to Rome.

II. The Library of the Lyons Academy possessed for a long time (cupboard 131—12506) a unique copy of Ballanche's *Antigone* on vellum. It was a copy of the 1819 edition (Paris, Renouard, in-8, with 6 engravings from sketches by Bouillon). (See Brunet, *Manuel du libraire*.) It was bequeathed to the Lyons Academy by Mme. Récamier, and was stolen from there.

III. M. Léon Séché (*Les manuscrits des Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe, Revue bleue* of March 10th, 1900, p. 314) mentions as having disappeared: First, an autograph manuscript book of the *M.O.T.*, which had belonged to Jules Simon, and had been taken away in 1873, together with a certain number of valuable letters; secondly, the first part of the autograph MS. of the *M.O.T.*, written by Mme. Récamier and Mme. Lenormant.

IV. Benjamin Constant's manuscripts have been dispersed on all sides. Several of them are lost, and among the principal ones:

(1) Constant's *Journal intime* before 1804, perhaps among the family papers of Constant de Rebecque, quoted with the date of 1795 by M. Adrien de Constant. (See the *Introduction* by Melegari to the *Journal intime postérieur à 1804*, p. viii., and Le Breton, *Ann. fac. lett. Bordeaux*, 1889, I, p. 23.)

(2) *La suite d'Adolphe* (story of Charlotte). Saint-Beuve thought that Pagès de l'Ariège had been entrusted with the posthumous publication of this novel. (See Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, XI, p. 440, and Melegari, *Introduction*, p. lxx, note 2.)

(3) Constant's *Carnet*, given by him to his secretary, Loève-Veimars (*Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1833, Vol. I, *Lettres sur les hommes d'état de la France*), quoted several times by Sainte-Beuve, particularly in P. L. III, pp. 282, 283.

(4) Constant's correspondence with Mme. de Staél, which is entirely destroyed. (See Melegari, *Introduction*, p. xi.) There is a letter from Constant (*Lettres à Mme. Récamier*, pp. 331 and 332) asking for this correspondence, "in order to show some of it to the Duc de Broglie and to

his wife." According to Pons (*Sainte-Beuve et ses inconnues*, p. 137) Constant sold it for a hundred thousand francs to the Duchesse de Broglie. Sainte-Beuve affirms and reproves this disappearance (*Correspondance*, II, p. 268). André Le Breton is glad that these letters were destroyed. (*Ann. fac. lettres Bordeaux*, 1889, Vol. I, p. 22.) Other people may consider the matter in a different light.

V. From Mme. Récamier herself there are only, says Sainte-Beuve (*Causeries du Lundi*, XIV, p. 303), "a very few pages, a few accounts of various things, and some notes." She did not care much about writing, although her friend the Duc de Laval endeavoured to persuade her that her style was "charming and in exquisite taste." (*Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 246.) She only ventured to commence, in collaboration with Ballanche in 1819, a translation of Petrarch, some fragments of which are still among her papers. (See *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 307.) Camille Jordan persuaded her to write her *Mémoires* "by way of diversion, and to elude the fatal need of stormy emotions." (See *Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 134.) She compiled them during the latter part of her life, but a clause in her will obliged her heirs to destroy all that she had prepared. The parcel which she expressly mentioned was accordingly burnt, but among her other papers some fragments were fortunately found, and among others those which M. de Chateaubriand used, whole pages of which he copied when compiling his own *Mémoires*. (*Souv. et Corr.*, preface, p. v.) These are: (1) A fragment about the stay in the convent (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 2); (2) a fragment about the first interview with Mme. de Staél (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 24 and 25); (3) a fragment about M. Bernard's dismissal from office (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, from p. 67 to p. 77); (4) a fragment about Mme. de Staél's exile and the Moreau affair (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, from p. 78 to p. 82); (5) a fragment about Queen Hortense (*Souv. et Corr.*, II, from p. 72 to p. 85); and a few more unimportant fragments. It would have been most interesting for our study to have reconstituted Mme. Récamier's correspondence, the letters written by her and the answers. This work was practically impossible, owing to the long life of Mme. Récamier and the great number of her correspondents. We have found and consulted very many of the letters from her:

(1) Among her own papers. These are either letters which had been kept and later on returned to her, or those of which she had kept copies. These are now classed in the different collections of which we shall speak later on.

(2) In published works, in Mme. Lenormant's various books, in Sainte-Beuve's articles, in the *Souvenirs* published in 1868 by Baron Degérando, in the *Correspondance de François Gérard*, in the *Intermédiaire des chercheurs et des curieux* (see 1897, I, pp. 129, 130; 1869, p. 456), etc.

(3) In public collections. The Bibliothèque Nationale has at least two of these (Autogr., Vol. 5, fr. 12760, and collection Lefebvre, 7, 1307). The Clermont-Ferrand Library has one (340-341 [212^a]). The Fontainebleau Library has a letter from Mme. Récamier to Mme. Jacotot, painter of the King's cabinet (12 [B.B.7]). The Lyons Library has a letter to Mme. Delphin (MSS. Coste, 1132, Desvernay et Molinier). At the Rouen Library (Coll. Duputel, No. 502, and Coll. de Blosseville, No. 1613) there are two autographs wrongly attributed to Mme. Récamier, as they are Dr. Récamier's.

(4) In private collections. Our researches here have been very difficult. A great number of Mme. Récamier's letters are dispersed among private collections and family papers. The *Bulletin Charavay* has mentioned several of these. Some of them are unimportant, such, for instance, as the one reproduced in the "Catalogue of the Collection of Autograph Letters

formed by Alfred Morrison, and printed for private circulation," 1891, Vol. V, pp. 243 and 244 (Bibl. Nat., gQ, 11 Réserve). We have had some letters to Camille Jordan to look through, which are in the hands of M. Robert Boubée, of Lyons, and two letters to the painter Fleury Richard, belonging to M. Ernest Richard, of Lyons.

On the other hand, we have missed some very important letters, either because they have disappeared or because it has seemed to us too indiscreet to ask to be allowed to read them. The letters from Mme. Récamier to Chateaubriand would have been invaluable, but it is a well-known fact that the author of the *Mémoires* usually destroyed letters of this kind. Mme. Lenormant declares in *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 138, that she has made many fruitless efforts to find the letters to Mathieu de Montmorency. Prince Augustus of Prussia wrote to Mme. Récamier on the 21st of April 1843: "All your letters shall be burnt without being read by anyone" (M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.). As to the letters to Mme. de Staél, which Ballanche hoped to read some day (*Biogr. de Mme. Récamier*, p. 33), they are probably still among the Coppet papers. At the beginning of his work on the *Salon de Mme. Necker* (Vol. I, p. 4) M. d'Haussonville affirms that there are letters from Mme. Récamier "in the twenty-seven volumes of letters addressed to M. or Mme. Necker, and in the bundles of Mme de Staél's papers which are not yet classified." There are also her letters to Prosper de Barante. "These letters," writes M. Anatole France (*Vie littér.*, IV, p. 29 and following), "have been preserved. There are certain reasons why they should not be published immediately. They are in safe hands, but not so jealously guarded as to prevent a few lines being read secretly. *I can say they have a very pretty turn, and they are more tender and more feminine* than might have been expected. Sainte-Beuve said that as Mme. Récamier had no style and was not witty, she was prudent enough only to write short notes. That clever man, who knew everything, did not, however, know these letters of which I speak. There is grace, delicacy, and almost fire in them. These letters, if published, and they will be published, will not divulge Julie's secret. A doubt will still remain. But at least everyone will know that the divine Julie had more feeling than she is said to have. It will be known that she confessed her real or feigned weakness to a very young man, a man five years younger than she was. And she will no longer be the woman whom Jules de Goncourt so prettily terms 'the Madonna of conversation.'"

II

MANUSCRIPTS

A.—National Archives

(1) About M. Bernard, Mme. Récamier's father, a portfolio of four documents labelled F^r. 6283, 5774.

(2) About M. Récamier, banker, AF^{IV}, p. 85, decree of the 7th of Messidor, year VIII.

AF^{IV}, p. 983, decree of the 5th of Floréal, year XIII.

Portfolio F^r. 6454 (9515).

Portfolio F^r. 6539 (1744, series 2), 118 papers.

Portfolio F^r. 6571 (2848, series 2), three papers.

Portfolio F^r. 4774⁸⁸ (four papers, very important).

(3) About Mme. Récamier.

Portfolio F^r. 6569 (2688), six papers. AF^{IV}, 1517.

B. Bibliothèque Nationale

(1) Manuscript notice about Mme. Récamier, five pages and a half in autograph with notice, manuscript, unpublished, Fr. 12760, Vol. V, p. 402.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

These notices are by Baron de Trémont (See *Catal. somm. des ouvr. et docum. relat. à la période contemp.*, I, Bibl. Nat. Catalogue, 450).

(2) Letters and fragments of various works by Chateaubriand (MSS. fr. 12454-12455; collection described in the Catalogue Omont). The MS. 12455 is the copy of the former one. These fragments (see the back of page 61) were collected by Chateaubriand's secretary, Ed. l'Agneau, and handed over by him to M. Bricon in 1845.

C.—Archives of the Department of the Rhône

In Series M there are a few unimportant papers about the political police agency at Lyons during the First Empire.

D.—Public Libraries of Lyons

(1) Grande Bibliothèque, Fonds Coste. A letter from Collombet, one from C. Jordan, one from Brillat-Savarin, one from Mme. Récamier, one from Lémontey, one from Ballanche.

(2) Bibliothèque du Palais des Arts. (No. 282 and not 283, according to the *Catalogue des bibl. des départements*, Vol. 31, p. 134.) Eulogy of Mme. Récamier, MS. of 28 pages. This is the Memoir No. 1, addressed to the Lyons Academy for its competition of 1851. The reporter (*Mém. de l'Ac. de Lyon, Cl. des lettres*, 1851, p. 89) pronounces this work as of little interest and badly written. An examination of the manuscript justifies this opinion.

(3) Grande Bibliothèque. Manuscripts, notes, and various papers belonging to Pierre-Simon Ballanche, given to the city of Lyons by Colonel d'Hautefeuille, five portfolios (See Bibl. de la V. de Lyon, Catalogue Desverney et Molinier, Nos. 1806-1810). The first portfolio contains the following note by V. de Laprade :

"Important note. Ballanche's papers—very suitably placed in the Lyons Library—belong legally to the heirs of Mme. Récamier, that is to Mme. Charles Lenormant and her family. They were given quite formally by Ballanche to Mme. Récamier. The latter, on leaving the Abbaye-aux-Bois to go and settle with her niece at the Royal Library, where she died, confided the box containing these papers to the Comtesse d'Hautefeuille (Anna-Maria). This box was taken to a château belonging to the Hautefeuille family, I do not know where. After the death of this lady, her husband or another heir, believing no doubt that these papers belonged to him, bequeathed them to the city of Lyons, but I very much doubt whether they arrived there intact. During Mme. d'Hautefeuille's lifetime I made fruitless attempts to have these papers to look through, although I was the last person to receive Ballanche's wishes and ideas about the complete publication of his works. I quite understood that by a scruple of misplaced devotion this lady was not anxious to see what remained of Ballanche's writings published, and more particularly *La Ville des Expiations*. She considered that this book was not sufficiently orthodox, although she was quite incapable of deciding that, and at any rate this did not give her the right to do away with the author's idea. When the papers were sent to Lyons, M. Monfalcon was kind enough to let me see them, and I went through them carefully. We did not find a single letter addressed to Ballanche, and not even an autograph of Mme. Récamier's. The one which the Library now possesses was sent to it at my request by Mme. Ch. Lenormant. It is strange that Ballanche should not have kept any letter from his illustrious correspondents, Chateaubriand and so many others. I fancy that these autographs are either in the attics of the Hautefeuille château or elsewhere. If someone more fortunate

than I have been, but not more devoted to the memory of Ballanche, having the money and the health that I have not, should undertake the publication of the complete works of that great mind, which was so little known, he would erect the finest literary monument to the glory of the city of Lyons that could possibly be put up.

"Among my papers will be found a copy of the letters of Ballanche to Mme. Récamier, which her niece, Mme. Lenormant, kindly made for me, several autograph letters from Ballanche to Camille Jordan and to M. Dupin of Montpellier, and his correspondence with Bredin, of the Veterinary School, his intimate friend. M. Bredin's son allowed me to take a copy of these letters.—*VICTOR DE LAPRADE.*"

(4) The Grande Bibliothèque of Lyons possesses a unique copy of *L'Histoire* by Monfalcon, which contains some manuscript papers. Some of these are interesting for our study (see Catalogue Desverney et Molinier, p. 553 and following, Vol. IV).

At the beginning of the volume there is a business letter from Mme. Récamier to Aguado, Marquis de Las Marismas (a page and a half, signed).

P. 221, a very interesting note of four pages of the works executed by Chinard, statuary (autograph, not signed), very useful for the history of Mme. Récamier's bust.

P. 229, an autograph letter from Cardinal Fesch (September 18th, 1812) to Mme. de Fontanges, maid of honour to Madame.

P. 245, a letter from Artaud, Director of the Museums of Lyons, in which Ballanche is mentioned.

P. 301, the manuscript of one large page of the speech made by Ballanche on the transfer of the remains of Elisa Mercœur (May 18th, 1836).

P. 303, an unimportant note from Ballanche.

P. 305, a short note in which Ballanche announces that he is sending the *Antigone* to Charles Nodier.

E.—Montpellier Library

CHATEAUBRIAND.—A story of five small pages, entitled *Léonie*, addressed to Mme. Récamier. Published by L. G. Pélissié in *L'Intermédiaire des chercheurs* (February 20th, 1902). The date of 1814 in the paper proves that this document is after the Restoration.

F.—Public Library of Geneva

M.C.C. No. 18^a. Letters from Rosalie de Constant to Charles de Constant (1805-1810). Third folio. 117 letters or fragments of letters.

No. 36. 134 autograph letters from Benjamin Constant to his aunt, the Comtesse de Nassau, *née* de Chandieu, of Lausanne.

Nos. 36a and 36b (same folio):

(1) Forty-two letters, written by Benjamin Constant to his uncle, Samuel de Constant (years 1783, 1786, 1788-89, 1795-1800), and a forty-third letter from Benjamin to his cousin, Juste de Constant, of October 15th, 1788. Three of these letters are accompanied by a few lines from Mme. de Staél.

(2) Twenty-three letters written by Benjamin Constant to his cousin, Charles de Constant, from 1811 to 1830.

(3) A hundred and ninety-two autograph letters from Benjamin Constant to his cousin, Rosalie de Constant, at Lausanne, from 1786 to 1830. These letters contain very little information about Mme. R., but they are indispensable for consulting about general events. One must use a certain amount of discretion, and not trust too much to them. On the fourth page of one of these letters Rosalie de Constant has written: "He had the art of deceiving all his partisans without being faithless to them; he deceived

R[osalie] more than all the others, and she judged him feeble and changeable, in order not to own herself duped." (See J. H. Menos, *Lettres de Benjamin Constant à sa famille*, p. 371.)

G.—*Madame Récamier's Papers.* (M. Charles de Loménie's documents).

1. J. J. Ampère, *Souvenirs de Mme. Récamier à Rome.* Seven pages and a half. Copy.

2. A series of manuscripts as follows :

(1) Plan of a chapter that J. J. Ampère intended to insert in his *Ballanche* (in the author's handwriting), together with a copy of this work.

(2) A study by J. J. Ampère, intended as an introduction to a publication of Ballanche's letters (in the author's handwriting), and some fragments of Ballanche's letters (copy, not signed).

(3) Some notes on Ballanche by Mme. d'Hautefeuille. Mme. Récamier could not have consented to the insertion of her friend's letters in J. J. Ampère's book. The Comtesse d'Hautefeuille took up Ampère's work later on. She prepared a "brief glance at the circumstances" under which these letters were written, which she intended to use as an introduction to this collection. M. Ch. de Loménie has two slightly different copies of this introduction.

3. A collection, entitled *Lettres de M. Ballanche à Mme. Récamier, 1813-1846. Lettres de Camille Jordan*, containing a hundred and fifty-eight letters from Ballanche to Mme. Récamier; a fragment of two pages and a half of a story by Ballanche, *Le Château de Coppet*; a letter from Ballanche to Paul David (No. 148 of the collection); a letter from the same to Mlle. Mazure (No. 162 of the collection); a letter from the same to M. de Lavergne (No. 167 of the collection); fourteen letters from the same to Mme. Lenormant; two letters from the same to Ch. Lenormant; an extract of one page of the life of Corneille by Fontenelle; two letters from Camille Jordan to Mme. Récamier—altogether a hundred and eighty-one papers. These letters were given by Mme. Lenormant to V. de Laprade for his complete edition of the works of the Lyonese philosopher. (*Mme. R. et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 4.) In M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS. there is also a copy of these letters (40 pages).

4. A series of sixteen letters from Ballanche to various persons: seven to Paul David, six to Mme. Lenormant, three to Mme. Récamier, and a fragment, consisting of a page and a half on the names of the sibyls.

5. *Biographie de Mme. Récamier* in MS., by Ballanche. This biography is preceded by the following Introduction : "A woman of our times has attained celebrity without having sought it in any way. Illustrious friends came to her for fresh splendour, and all the arts were eager to consecrate her. She could not therefore escape memoirs and biographies. Some of the publishers or editors of these different biographies have applied to me for exact information, and I have been drawn into writing a fuller biography myself. The one contained in this note-book is far from being definitive. I hope some day to come back to this work, which is evidently so imperfect, and which I should so much like to complete. I may then be able to add the continuation and the harmony which the subject deserves, and to characterize a fame so distinct from all others." This preface is signed by Ballanche.

Several pages of the work are cut out. Those which remain are the following : From 1 to 6, from 11 to 25, from 29 to 40, from 45 to 54, from 59 to 92, from 95 to 126, from 129 to 140, from 143 to 172 (copy of the letters from Benjamin Constant to Mme. R., rather different from the text published by Mme. Lenormant), from 177 to 188, p. 197, and from 228 to 256.

The text is dated at the end 1823.

The index includes twenty-seven chapters.

At the end of this biography Ballanche has himself copied :

(1) The poem by Gabriel Legouvé to Mme. Récamier on the subject of her not consenting to share any other sentiment than friendship. (*C.L.A.R.*, No. 77.)

(2) *Le Lys*, to Mme. Récamier, a ballad by M. Eusèbe de Salverte.

(3) To Mme. Giulietta Récamier, March 18th, 1814. Ritrovata nello studio del celeberrimo professore Canova mentre stava esso travagliando alle statue della felicità e della pace. A canzonet in sixteen stanzas.

(4) To Mme. Récamier, *Venise*, an elegy by J. J. Ampère. (See *Heures de poésie*, p. 124 and following.) In the copy the poem is dated December 24th, 1824.

(5) Chateaubriand's letter to Mme. Récamier, published in the *M.O.T.* (Biré's edition, Vol. V, p. 120 and following.)

(6) A long letter from Chateaubriand to Mme. R., in three fragments. (Thursday morning, July 29th, 1830; the same day at noon; Friday.) Published in *Souv. et Corr.*, Vol. II, p. 388 and following.

(7) A letter from the same to Mme. Récamier, from Geneva, Friday, May 27th, 1831. This letter is not published in its right place in the *M.O.T.* (See Biré's edition, Vol. V, p. 434.)

(8) The verses by Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier, inserted in *M.O.T.* (Biré's edition, Vol. V, pp. 436 and 437). *Le Naufragé*. This piece is dated in Ballanche's copy from Geneva, June 15th, 1831.

(9) A note written by Chateaubriand "on Mme. Récamier's tablets." August 28th, 1832.

To this important manuscript is, of course, added Ballanche's biography of Mme. Récamier, in twelve pages. It appears to be a sketch for the large biography.

6. Letters from Prosper de Barante to Mme. Récamier.

7. A portfolio (mentioned as 41 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection) containing a number of letters from the Comtesse de Boigne to Mme. Récamier and to Mme. Lenormant, a copy of a chapter of the memoirs of the Comtesse de Boigne, and several letters from the Duchesse de Broglie.

8. A portfolio of the Duchesse de Broglie's letters. It contains, among other papers, five letters from Mme. Rilliet (see about this person the *Notice sur le caractère et les écrits de Mme. de Staél*), nine letters from Miss Randall, eight letters from Auguste de Staél, thirty-six letters from the Duchesse de Broglie, four letters from Mme. Rambuteau de Rocca, wife of the son of Mme. de Staél and de Rocca. (See P. Gautier, *Mme. de Staél et Napoléon*, p. 298, note 5.)

9. Letters from M. de Chateaubriand—two volumes.

I. Letters to Mme. Récamier during his Ambassadorship in London, numbered by Mme. Lenormant from 14 to 53, a letter from Verona, No. 54, and a letter not dated, but belonging to the year 1824.

Letters to Mme. Récamier during his Ambassadorship in Rome, numbered by Mme. Lenormant from 57 to 195. In this numbering a note from Chateaubriand to Cardinal Fesch is included, No. 173. We have kept to these numbers which are inscribed on the originals, but one letter frequently has several numbers. A letter of March 21st, 1829, is numbered as No. 163 and 164, because it is eight pages long.

II. The second volume is numbered by pages and not by letters. It includes :

(1) An autograph letter to Mme. R., p. 1.

(2) Four autograph letters to Ballanche, p. 3 and following.

(3) An autograph letter to Mme. R., p. 15.

(4) A paper from the Court of Justice of the Seine Department

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- (5) Fifty letters to Mme. R., all autographs, from p. 17 to p. 128.
- (6) A letter from Chateaubriand to Ballanche, dated August 7th, 1840 (p. 128).
- (7) Forty-nine letters, autograph or otherwise, from Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier, from p. 130 (18 autographs, 31 copies or dictated letters).
- (8) A note from Henriette Guizot to Mme. Récamier, not dated, but of 1843 (p. 209).
- (9) Thirty-four letters, autograph or otherwise, from Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier, from p. 210 to p. 247 (six autographs).
- (10) Five letters from M. Mandaroux-Vertamy (p. 247).
- (11) A dictated letter from Chateaubriand to Mme. Lenormant, p. 252.
- (12) A letter from Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier (p. 254).
- (13) A letter from Chateaubriand which appears to be addressed to Mme. Lenormant (p. 255).
- (14) A short autograph letter from Chateaubriand to Mme. R., which appears to be of the year 1843 (p. 255).

(15) A copy in the Vicomtesse de Chateaubriand's handwriting of a letter from the Comte de Chambord to the Mayor of —, and twenty-three letters from the Vicomtesse de Chateaubriand (p. 258 and following).

- (16) A non-autograph letter from Chateaubriand to Mme. Lenormant, only dated Friday, December 9th.

In this second volume there are a hundred and thirty-seven letters, autograph or otherwise, from Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier.

10. Supplementary papers with the letters from M. de Chateaubriand :

- (1) Four letters from Chateaubriand, one dictated letter of 1845, the one quoted in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, pp. 545 and 546 ; an autograph letter of November 7th, 1823 (*ibid.*, pp. 37 and 38) ; an autograph letter of November 29th, 1823 (*ibid.*, pp. 41, 42, 43) ; an autograph letter of February 9th, 1825.

(2) Copy of a letter from Chateaubriand to Mathieu de Montmorency (five pages) : "I am writing to ask you, noble Viscount, what is the object," etc.

- (3) Eight letters from Chateaubriand to Mme. R. during the Congress of Verona.

(4) A letter from Chateaubriand to Victor Hugo, of February 18th, 1840, published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 505.

(5) Rough draft of a letter from Chateaubriand to M. de la Ferronnays of Monday, May 26th, 1828 : "Noble Count, on reading your letter again," etc.

(6) Letter from Vinet to Chateaubriand, November 5th, 1836. It is signed.—The author of the articles in the *Semeur* relating to the *Essai sur la littérature anglaise*.

(7) Two unimportant letters from the Vicomtesse de Chateaubriand.

(8) Three letters from Hyde de Neuville to Mme. Lenormant, one of which is a very fine one, dated October 6th, 1850, on the political situation.

(9) Six letters from the Comte de Chateaubriand, a nephew of Chateaubriand's, to Mme. Récamier and to Mme. Lenormant, and a few notes of rectification from the same for the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*.

(10) A letter from the Mayor of Saint-Malo to Ampère, asking him to thank Mme. Récamier for her gift to that town of Chateaubriand's portrait ; a receipt of November 19th, 1848, acknowledging the sending of the said portrait.

11. Copy of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, beginning with the words : "Memoirs of my life, commenced in 1809. Book I. I have often said to myself that I would never write the memoirs of my life . . . to . . . the

Abbé Porcher, Principal of the College of Dôle. I was handed over to him, and had to go with him in spite of my tears." (76 pages with 19 lines to a page.)

12. A portfolio (quoted as 54 in M. de Loménie's collection) containing :
(1) A copy of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, from "en rentrant à Constance nous avons trouvé sur le rivage" as far as "en voyant ce que c'est que d'être véritablement aimé." Then follows the copy of the verses to Mme. Récamier. There are in all 16 pages. This copy has some interesting variations from the printed text.

(2) Various copies and rough sketches in Mme. Récamier's and Ballanche's handwriting.

13. A bound collection entitled *B. Constant, Lettres, portraits et journal*, containing :

(1) Benjamin Constant's letters to Mme. Récamier, preceded by an *Introduction*, dated October 15th, 1845, and not signed (16 pages). Copies of Constant's letters (73 letters).

(2) Fragments by Benjamin Constant, which Mme. Lenormant styles *Portraits*. Several pages of the autograph manuscript are missing. They were, partly at any rate, taken away from Mme. Récamier by Mme. Louise Colet (according to a note by Mme. Lenormant, who has supplied these passages from a copy). It was in 1814 (see the *Lettres de Constant à Mme. Récamier*, p. 66 and note 1) that Benjamin Constant wrote these fragments at the request of his friend. In a letter he says : "I am going to write our memoirs" (*ibid.*, p. 112).

(3) Fragments of Benjamin Constant's diary sent to Mme. Récamier by his brother. This is a copy.

February 1812.

May 1813. End of June; September; October. 1814, September dated the 4th : "I have troubled about nothing but Juliette. What folly! Played by way of diversion, and won." There is a very important fragment dated the 18th, and then every day without interruption until April 17th, 1815. At the date of December 10th are the words, "This diary is a repository of follies."

14. Protest by François-Paul David against the publication announced by the newspaper *La Presse* of Benjamin Constant's private letters to Mme. Récamier, and against the document by which this publication was supposed to be authorized.

15. Fifteen letters from Mme. Desbordes-Valmore to Mme. Récamier from 1825 to 1847. Three other letters were sold (*C.L.A.R.*, No. 43). Mme. Lenormant did not wish to publish these texts in 1859, out of consideration for a person who was still living (*Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 193).

16. A bound collection, entitled *Lettres de personnages étrangers*, including :

A letter from the Prince of Würtemberg, published in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, p. 84.

A letter from Mme. de Bondy about the Prince of Bavaria, published in *Souv. et Corr.*, I, pp. 92 and 93.

Nine letters from George, Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz; the second and sixth are published in *Souv. et Corr.*, II, p. 88 and following. An extract from Goethe is added, translated and addressed to Mme. Récamier by the Grand Duke.

A letter from Gustavus, Prince of Mecklenburg-Schwerin (August 27th, 1824).

A letter from Charles, Duke of Mecklenburg (October 29th, 1818).

Nine letters from Prince Alphonse Pignatelli (see *Coppet et Weimar*, p. 79, note 1), and three letters about his illness and death.

A hundred and fourteen letters from Prince Augustus of Prussia to Mme. Récamier, the original copy of his oath of October 28th, 1807, and

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a copy of Mme. Récamier's oath ; three letters from the same to Mme. de Staél ; a letter from the same to the painter, François Gérard ; and fragments of letters from the same to Mme. Récamier.

Two letters from Alexander von Humboldt (the second addressed to Mme. Lenormant).

A letter from the "grand-duc héréditaire de Saxe," October 1848, and two letters to him about the Comte de Grave and Mme. de Boigne.

Six letters from the Comte Palfy.

A letter from Prince Tzernicheff.

A letter from M. de Lucchesini.

Thirty letters from Baron de Vogt, and two fragments and one letter from the same to Mme. de Staél.

Six letters from Hamilton, Marquis of Douglas.

Two letters from his sister, Lady Hamilton.

A letter from Mackintosh (August 6th, 1815).

A letter from Cicognara (July 23rd, 1825).

Ten letters from M. d'Alpeus.

A letter from Robert Adair (May 6th, 1836).

Two letters from Edouard Gans.

A letter from the Marquis de Gallo.

Three letters from the Comte Golowkin (a letter wrongly attributed by Mme. Lenormant to the Comte Golowkin is from the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg).

17. Mme. Ch. Lenormant's early souvenirs.

18. Unpublished souvenirs of Louis de Loménie.

19. Letters from the de Montmorencys to Mme. Récamier :

1st volume.—A hundred and seventy-two letters from Mathieu de Montmorency to Mme. R., from 1800 to 1825.

A letter from M. de Montmorency to M. Degérando.

A letter from M. de Montmorency to M. Dalmassy.

A letter from M. de Montmorency to Mme. de Staél. Addressed to her in care of her maid.

A letter from M. de Montmorency to Prince Pignatelli.

A letter from M. de Montmorency to Mme. de Broglie.

A meditation by M. de Montmorency, in one page, written at the Val des Loups on the 14th of July, 1823, for the anniversary of the death of Mme. de Staél.

A biographical notice on Mathieu, written by Adrien de Montmorency, (16 pages).

2nd volume.—A hundred and twenty-three letters from Adrien de Montmorency, Duc de Laval, divided into two series : (1) Fifteen letters from the time of his return from emigration until 1807. (2) A hundred and eight letters from 1811 to his death, numbered from 1 to 108. There is a No. 10 (*a*) and a No. 95 (*a*) ; Nos. 75 and 104 are missing. There is also a letter from the same to Ballanche.

Thirty-six letters from the Duchesse de Luynes, mother of Mme. Mathieu de Montmorency, to Mme. Récamier, numbered from 1 to 34. There is a No. 8 (*a*) and a No. 21 (*a*).

Five letters from the Duchesse de Chevreuse to Mme. Récamier during her banishment to Lyons, numbered from 1 to 4. There is a No. 2 (*a*).

Seven letters from Henri de Montmorency, son of Adrien de Montmorency, to Mme. Récamier.

Forty-one letters from the Duchesse Mathieu de Montmorency to Mme. Récamier, numbered from 2 to 43. No. 1 and No. 8 of this series are two notes from the Duchesse, the one rectifying the *Mémoires* of the Duchesse d'Abrantès, the other one destined for Chateaubriand on a private matter.

20. A portfolio (numbered 40 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection) com-

prising letters from the Marquis de Vérac, from the Vicomtesse de Noailles, from the Duc and Duchesse de Noailles to Mme. Récamier.

21. Thirty-two letters from the Duchesse de Raguse.

Twenty-four dated letters to Mme. Récamier. The first is the 26th of Floréal, the year X, and the last August 4th, 1843.

A letter of the 10th of May, 1806, to Mme. de Staél.

Two letters, from 1837 to 1847, without any address, but probably to Ballanche.

Five letters, not dated, to Mme. Récamier.

22. Letters from M. Récamier to Mme. Récamier (July 13th, 1807, July 19th, 1807, May 21st [1811], June 22nd, 1811, September 5th, 1811—on the subject of the banishment—September 28th, 1811, January 16th, 1812, June 19th, 1812, July 15th, 1812, July 1st, 1816), and three undated letters from the same.

Three letters from Mme. Delphin, *née Récamier*, to Mme. Récamier.

A letter from Alphée Récamier to Mme. Récamier, her aunt.

A letter from L. Récamier to Mme. Récamier, her sister-in-law.

23. A note-book, quoted 13 in M. Ch. de Loménie's collection, containing letters from and to various persons (copies). It is from this note-book that Mme. Lenormant borrowed the fragments of the *Mémoires de Mme. Récamier* which she published. The pages on which these fragments were written are for the most part torn out.

24. A collection comprising sixty-two copies of letters, fifty-two of which are from Mme. Récamier to J. J. Ampère. One is from Ballanche to the same, and one from Mme. and M. Lenormant to the same. Six from Chateaubriand are to the same. Some parts of these letters have been published by Mme. Lenormant.

25. A bound collection, entitled *Lettres de Mme. Récamier*, comprising :

(1) The holograph will of Mme. Récamier, September 15th, 1842.

(2) A letter from M. R. to Mme. R. (September 3rd, 1811), published in *Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 73.

(3) A letter from M. R. to Baron Pasquier, undated, but of September 3rd, 1811.

(4) A letter from Baron Pasquier to M. Récamier (September 17th, 1811). (*Mme. Récamier et les amis de sa jeunesse*, p. 80.)

(5) Twelve letters from Mme. Récamier to Mlle. Amélie Cyvoct, then a boarder at the Convent of the Sacré-Cœur, Rue des Postes, 1818-1819-1820.

(6) A letter from Mme. R. to M. Lenormant (1825?).

(7) Six letters from Mme. Récamier to Mme. Lenormant, from 1826 to 1828.

(8) A letter from Ballanche to Mme. Lenormant (July 23rd, 1828).

(9) Eight letters from Mme. Récamier to Mme. Lenormant, from 1828 to 1829.

(10) A letter from Ballanche to Mme. Lenormant (June 28th, 1829). P.S. from Mme. Récamier.

(11) Twenty-two letters from Mme. Récamier to Mme. Lenormant, from 1829 to 1844, one of which is dictated.

(12) A copy by Mme. Récamier of Chateaubriand's *Prières chrétiennes pour quelques afflictions à la vie*.

To this collection eight other papers are added : Five letters from Mme. Récamier to Mme. Delphin of Lyons ; three letters from Mme. Récamier to Mme. Lenormant.

26. Mme. Récamier's wills.

27. Letters from Mme. Récamier :

A letter without address or date.

A letter to the Duchesse de Larocheoucauld-Liancourt.

Seventy-three letters to M. Paul David.

Three letters to Camille Jordan, one of which is more than ten pages. Ten letters to Gérard.

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28. *Incomplete collection of contemporary writings about Mme. Récamier.* An epigraph in Mme. Récamier's handwriting: "I am situated in solitude, but on the confines of society, in such a way as to distinguish many objects without being beset by any one of them." Extracts from the *Biogr. portative des contemporains*, by Benjamin Constant; from the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, Vol. II; from the *Mémoires du Duc de Rovigo*, Vol. V; from the *Mémoires de M. de Bourrienne*; from *Corinne, ou l'Italie*, Book VI; from the *Château de Coppet*, by Mme. de Genlis; from the *Considérations sur la révolution française*, Part IV, chapter viii; from *Dix années d'exil*, Part II, chapter iv; from the *Livre des Cent et un*, Vol. I; from the *Mémoires de la Duchesse d'Abrantès*; from the *Lettres sur les hommes d'état de la France*, Vol. II, Benjamin Constant (*West End Review*); from the *Revue de Paris*, Vol. III, article by Jules Janin; extract from the *Revue du Midi*, Vol. VI, Part I, article by Léonce de Lavergne; by Chateaubriand (?) *Amélie est grande*; end of the *Dedication* of the *Palin-génésie sociale*.

29. A bound collection, entitled *Lettres de Mme. de Stael*, comprising several groups:

(1) Twenty-four letters from Mme. de Stael to the Grand Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, copies sent to Mme. Récamier in 1845, with an autograph letter signed Charles Alexandre. Two of these copies exist in duplicate. All these letters, except three, have been published by Mme. Lenormant in her volume *Coppet et Weimar*.

(2) A second group, containing an autograph letter from Mme. de Stael to the Citizen Consul; a copy in Mme. Récamier's handwriting of a letter from Mme. de Stael to Prince Augustus; three autograph letters from the same to her son; an autograph letter from the same to M. de Barante; a letter in verse and prose from the same, without address; two copies of letters from the same to General Moreau; a copy of a letter from the same to the Emperor Napoleon. Eight of these writings have not hitherto been published.

(3) A third group comprises twenty-three letters from Mme. de Stael to Mme. Récamier, written from 1800 to 1806; twenty-two autographs and one copy. Seventeen of these letters have not been published.

(4) A fourth group comprises seventy-seven letters or fragments of letters from Mme. de Stael to Mme. Récamier, written from January 1807 to September 1811; fifty-three autographs and twenty-four copies and a letter from Mathieu de Montmorency.

(5) A fifth group comprises forty letters or fragments of letters from Mme. de Stael to Mme. Récamier, written from September 1811 to May 1814; twenty-seven autographs and thirteen copies.

(6) A sixth group comprises thirty-one letters or fragments of letters from Mme. de Stael to Mme. Récamier, written from 1814 to 1817; twenty-nine autographs and two copies and a note from Schlegel to Mathieu de Montmorency.

This correspondence was read and utilized by Chateaubriand (See *M.O.T.*, Vol. IV, pp. 374 and 390). Sainte-Beuve also was acquainted with it (*Causeries du Lundi*, Vol. XIV, p. 305). Mme. Lenormant published many fragments of it. Rondelet indicates the importance of it in *Éloge de Mme. Récamier*, p. 110. Mme. Récamier showed it to Daniel Stern in March 1849 (*Mes souvenirs*, p. 359). According to Brifaut, these letters were claimed by Mme. de Stael's family and destroyed (*Mes souvenirs*, p. 360, note). The truth is that Mme. Récamier only burnt some of them in presence of Mme. de Broglie, after having taken a copy of them (according to a note by Mme. Récamier, copied by Mme. Lenormant, and dated April 26th, 1831, M. Ch. de Loménie's MSS.). See some very interesting information about these letters in the *Correspondance de Sainte-*

Beuve, Vol. II, p. 261 and following, pp. 268 and 269, p. 270, p. 318). See too in Eugène Ritter, *Notes sur Mme. de Staél*, p. 93 and following, a curious study of some six pages on the *Correspondance de Mme. de Staél*, and the difficulties in the way of research or of the publication of her letters.

H.—Other Private Collections.

1. Baron Lombroso's collection at Rome. Three autograph letters from General Maximilien Lamarque.
2. Dr. F. Brillat-Savarin's collection at Belley (Ain). Unpublished stories by Brillat-Savarin.
3. Correspondence addressed to Camille Jordan. Several collections. M. Boubée's collection at Lyons.
4. We believe that the letters from Lucien Bonaparte to Mme. Récamier, claimed in vain by the writer of them, kept later on by Mme. Lenormant and published in part by her (see *Souv. et Corr.*, Vol. I, p. 27 to p. 35), are now the property of Prince Roland Bonaparte.

III.

PUBLICATIONS.

For this bibliography, with three or four exceptions, we have kept exclusively to works in which Mme. Récamier is mentioned. This list completes our work, as it explains the selection we have been obliged to make among so many public documents. We give the size of the books, although for modern works this is of little importance.

We should have preferred classifying the works methodically, but we finally found the chronological order preferable to any other.

1. Charles Nodier, *Le dernier chapitre de mon roman*; Paris, Mme. Cavanagh, year IX (1803), in-12. (Compare Quérard, *Fr. litt.*, Vol. VI, p. 423.) (New edition, Brussels, Hauman, 1832; Bibl. Nat. Inv. Y², 56345.) On page 57 of this new edition, description of a "celebrated beauty," which, according to Louis de Loménie, applies to Mme. Récamier.
2. Reichardt, former maître de chapelle to Frederick II, *Lettres intimes écrites de Paris en 1802-1803*. 3 vols. in-8; Hamburg, B. G. Hoffmann, 1804. (B.N. Lk⁷, 6062.) Attacked by C. H. Vanderbourg (*Arch. litt. de l'Europe*, 1804, No. 3). Second edition in 1833. Translated in 1896 by A. Laquiante (see below).

3. August von Kotzebue, *Erinnerungen aus Paris im Jahre 1804*, third edition in two volumes; Berlin, Heinrich Frölich, 1804. This work is rare in France. A copy was lent us by the Strasburg Library. The part concerning Mme. Récamier is quoted in Ch. Monselet, *Portraits après décès*, p. 144 and following. According to Rabany, *Kotzebue, sa vie et son temps*, p. 511, an engraving in the first edition "represents Kotzebue, at Saint-Denis at the tomb of Henri IV, giving his arm to Mme. Récamier."

4. Guibert de Pixérécourt, Translation with notes of the above work; Paris, Barba, 1805, 2 vols. in-12. (B.N. Lk⁷, 6074.) The whole of chapter iv is devoted to Mme. Récamier.

5. F. L. Darragon, *Le dire sur M. Récamier, banquier de Paris, ou l'infortune aux prises avec l'opinion publique*, pamphlet of 8 pages; Paris, 16th Frimaire, year XIV (December 7th, 1805). (B.N. Ln²⁷, 17098.)

6. Benjamin Constant, *Adolphe*, 1816, in-12. According to Sismondi (*Lettres à Mme. d'Albany*, p. 301), "the officious friend who pretends to reconcile the hero with Ellénoire and increases the quarrel is Mme. Récamier."

7. Mme. de Staél, *Considérations sur les principaux événements de la révolution française*, posthumous work; Paris, Delaunay, 1818, 3 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³², 112.) See Vol. II, p. 307, a page on the exile of Mme. Récamier.

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8. Mme. de Staél, *Dix années d'exil*, posthumous work, published in 1818 by the Duc de Broglie and Baron de Staél. We have consulted and we quote the edition Charpentier. See pp. 254, 255, and following. There is a gap between the year 1804 and the stay at Fossé. This text has been republished by Paul Gautier; Paris, Plon, 1904.

9. Paul-Louis Courier, *Livret de Paul-Louis, vigneron, pendant son séjour à Paris*, 1823, in-8. Republished in the *Œuvres* by Flammarion, 1892, Vol. II. See page 110.

10. Las Cas, *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*; Paris, 1823, 8 vols. in-8. (B.N. Lb⁴⁸, 1954.) Consult the index. On the 18th of October, 1823, Prince Augustus of Prussia wrote from Berlin to Mme. Récamier: "In the 7th volume of the *Mémorial* by the Comte de Las Cas you and I are mentioned, but in a way that cannot be disagreeable to you, and which justifies the sentiments with which you inspired me." (M. Ch. de Loménie's papers.)

11. Delphine Gay, *Essais poétiques*, 1824, in-8. The piece entitled *Le bonheur d'être belle* is dedicated to Mme. Récamier.

12. Louis-Jérôme Gohier, *Mémoires*; Paris, Bossange frères, 1824, 2 vols. in-8. On page 304 of the second volume there is a note written in a kindly way about the intercourse of Prince Augustus of Prussia and Mme. Récamier. (B.N., La³³, 131.)

13. J. Fouché, Duc d'Otrante, *Mémoires*; Paris, Le Rouge, 1824, 2 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³³, 58.) The Catalogue of the Bibliothèque Impériale (1855, Vol. I, p. 180) gives this work as edited by Alph. de Beauchamp from notes supplied by M. de Jullian, ex-agent of Fouché. Madelin (Fouché, I, pp. xxvii and xxviii) attributes to Fouché "if not the writing, at least the inspiration and the first composition of this much-discussed book."

14. A. C. Thibaudeau, *Mémoires sur la Convention et le Directoire*; Paris, 1824, 2 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³³, 107.) See Vol. I, p. 131.

15. Comtesse de Genlis, *Mémoires*; Paris, 1825, 10 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³³ 60.) See Vol. V, p. 247; VI, pp. 96, 100 and following, 106, 107, 127; VII, p. 142 and following, p. 164 and following, p. 168; VIII, p. 26 and following. It is well known how little confidence can be placed in this work. (See Quérard, *Fr. litt.*, Vol. III, p. 309.) In a long letter dated November 7th, 1825, which has not hitherto been published, Prince Augustus of Prussia criticizes this book keenly and in an interesting way. "What I cannot forgive her," he writes to Mme. Récamier, "is her wrong judgment of you. . . . You are not well up in mathematics nor in chemistry, but you are acquainted with all the subjects useful to women, and you possess in the highest degree all those that give them charm." (M. Ch. de Lomenie's MSS.)

16. A. Brillat-Savarin, *Physiologie du goût*; Paris, 1825, in-8.

17. Anonymous, *Biographie des Quarante de l'Académie française*, second edition; Paris, 1826, in-8. Book sold at the drapery establishments. Attacks on Mme. Récamier in the notice on Math. de Montmorency.

18. *Archives historiques et statistiques du département du Rhône*, Vol. IV, from May 1st to October 30th, 1826; Lyons, Barret.

19. Ida Saint-Elme, known as *La Contemporaine*, *Mémoires d'une contemporaine*; Paris, 1827 and following, 8 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³³, 99.) This work contains nothing on Mme. Récamier. She is mentioned twice in the new edition of 1895, but these additions appear to be those of the publisher, M. Napoléon Ney.

20. Savary, Duc de Rovigo, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Napoléon*; Paris, 1828, 8 vols in-8. (B.N. Lb⁴⁴, 295.) See Vol. V, p. 6 and following. Important.

21. L. A. de Bourrienne, *Mémoires*, 1829-1831, 10 vols. in-8.

(B.N. La³³, 22.) See Vol. X, p. 324 and following. Very favourable to Mme. Récamier.

22. Lamothé-Langon, Damas-Hinard, Malitourne et de Villemarest, *Mémoires d'une femme de qualité sur Louis XVIII*; Paris, 1829, 4 vols. in-8. In Vol. I, p. 70 and following, commonplace and uninteresting praise of Mme. Récamier.

23. Thabaud de Latouche, known as Henri de Latouche, *Fragoletta, Naples et Paris en 1799*; 1829. We have consulted the Paris edition, 1840, Delloye, 2 vols. in-18. (B.N. Invent. Y², 47452-47453.)

24. Lamothé-Langon, *Mémoires et souv. d'une femme de qualité sur le Consulat et l'Empire*; Paris, Mame, 1830, 4 vols. in-8. In Vol. IV from p. 35 some uninteresting and unauthentic details about Mme. Récamier at Coppet and Mme. de Stael's society.

25. Constant, the Emperor's head valet, *Mémoires*, Vol. III.; Paris, Ladvocat, 1830. (B.N. Lb⁴⁴, 262.) With these *Mémoires* are "added" (to use the publisher's own words) "those of one of the chief ladies of the palace of the Empress Joséphine." The whole of Chapter II, devoted to Mme. Récamier, was written by the Baronne de V. (de Viel-Castel?).

26. Ballanche, *Oeuvres*; Paris, Barbezat, 1830, 4 vols. in-8. Vol. I, *Antigone, L'Homme sans nom, Élégie, Neuf fragments*, and a general preface, comprising *La Mort d'un platonicien, La Grande Chartreuse près de Grenoble en 1804, Les adieux à Rome*. Vol. II, *Essai sur les institutions sociales dans leur rapport avec les idées nouvelles, Le Vieillard et le jeune homme, Camille Jordan*. Vol. III, *Dédicace, Préface, Palingénésie sociale*. Vol. IV, First addition to the *Prologue*, *Orphée*.

27. Scipion Marin, *Histoire de la vie et des ouvrages de M. de Chateaubriand*; Paris, Vimont, 1832, 2 vols. in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 4073.) In the second volume there are two chapters (48 and 49) in which the intercourse between Chateaubriand and Mme. Récamier is related fully; the author emphasizes the *Moise* affair. On page 348 there is a eulogy of Mme. Récamier. The whole is very wordy and of little interest.

28. Mme. de Genlis, *Athénaïs, ou le château de Coppet en 1807, nouvelle historique*; Paris, Didot, 1832, in-18. A rare book, of which only a small edition was printed and which was never on sale. (B.N. Invent. Y², 38292.) Criticized severely by Sainte-Beuve, *Portraits de femmes*, p. 145. On the 22nd of September, 1831, Prince Augustus wrote to Mme. Récamier from Berlin: "I have read with keen emotion *Le château de Coppet en 1807*, and I felt again with real pleasure some of the sentiments I then experienced. The way in which you are spoken of, under another name, can only add to the high opinion with which you inspire people. But as a rule I think it inconvenient (*sic*) to expose the private life of individuals who are still living, and the ridicule thrown on M. Schlegel is unjust." (Unpublished letter in M. Oh. de Loménie's collection.)

29. *Le Diable boiteux à Paris, ou le livre des Cent et un*; 10 vols. in-8. Ladvocat. Vol. I, 1832. (B.N. Li³, 129.) This collection includes, besides the verses by Béranger to Chateaubriand (Paris, September 14th, 1831) and Chateaubriand's reply (Geneva, September 24th, 1831), an article by the Duchesse d'Abrantès on the Abbaye-aux-Bois.

30. Duchesse d'Abrantès, *Mémoires*; Paris, Ladvocat, 1831-34, 18 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³³, 4.) See specially V, p. 181 and following; XI, p. 371; XIV, p. 361 and following; XVII, p. 131 and following. Very favourable to Mme. Récamier, but very wordy.

31. Ballanche, *Oeuvres*, edition in 6 vols. in-18, Paris, 1833, like the edition in-8. See Sainte-Beuve's *Chronique littéraire*, March 1st, 1833, reprinted in the *Premiers Lundis*, II, p. 183.

32. Anonymous (F. de Montherol), *Mémoires poétiques, événements contemporains, voyages, facéties*; Paris, Techener, 1833, in-8. Edition of a

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hundred copies (Bibl. Lyons, 313652). The account of the reading of Chateaubriand's *Moïse* at the Abbaye is given in verse (pp. 15-30).

33. L.-V. (Loeve-Veimars), *Lettres sur les hommes d'état de la France*, II, Benjamin Constant, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1833, I, p. 185 and following. A remarkable article, full of information new for that epoch. About Benjamin Constant and Mme. Récamier see pp. 199 and 202; the author explains Constant's conduct during the Hundred Days as being due to Mme. Récamier's influence.

34. Léonce de Lavergne, article on *Chateaubriand à l'Abbaye* in the *Revue du Midi*; Toulouse, Paya, VI, 1st Book, April 1834, from p. 124 to p. 144. (B.N. Lc¹¹, 982.)

35. Sainte-Beuve, article on the *Mémoires de Chateaubriand* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, April 15th, 1834, reprinted in *Portr. cont.*, I, p. 7 to p. 44 of the edition in 3 and 5 vols. (See Michaut, *S.-B. avant les Lundis*, p. 628.)

36. Sainte-Beuve, article on *Ballanche* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, September 15th, 1834, reprinted in *Portr. cont.*, II of the edition in 5 vols. On the consequences of this article with regard to Sainte-Beuve and the Abbaye, see Latreille in *Minerva*, December 1st, 1902, p. 385, and Michaut, work quoted, p. 630.

37. *Lectures des Mémoires de M. de Chateaubriand, ou recueil d'articles publiées sur ces Mémoires, avec des fragments originaux*; Paris, Lefèvre, 1834. A rare work (B.N. Invent. Z, 45085), mentioned by Ed. Biré (edition of *Mémoires*, I, p. viii); analysed as early as 1836 by Mrs. Trollope in *Paris and the Parisians* in 1835, Letter LX.

38. Al. Rabbe, *Biogr. universelle et portative des contemporains*, Vol. V, Supplement; Paris, Levrault, 1834. The notice on Mme. Récamier contains several errors.

39. Marquise de Créqui (wrongly attributed to the —). (*Causen*), *Souvenirs*; Paris, 1834-35, 7 vols. in-8; apocryphal work. No notice must be taken of the information given about Mme. Récamier.

40. Duchesse d'Abrantès, *Mémoires sur la Restauration*; Paris, L'Henry, 1835-36, 6 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³⁸, 9.)

41. Mme. A. Tastu, *Poésies nouvelles*; Paris, Denain et Delamare, 1835. (B.N. Invent. Ye, 33757.) In the notes, p. 368, some brief thanks are given to Mme. Récamier.

42. Sainte-Beuve, article on *Mme. de Staél* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, May 1835, reprinted in *Portr. de femmes* from p. 81 to p. 164. This study contains matter for a volume; on Mme. Récamier, see pp. 125, 136, 146. (See Michaut, work quoted, p. 633.)

43. Comte Lamarque, *Mémoires et Souvenirs*; Paris, Fournier, 1835, 3 vols. in-8. (B.N. La³⁸, 73.) We believe that Mme. Récamier is referred to in three passages, I, p. 361 and p. 377; II, p. 193.

44. Edouard Gans, *Le salon de Mme. Récamier*, an article in the *Revue de Paris*, Brussels, 1836, translated from the German paper *Der literarische Zodiacus*.

45. G. Touchard-Lafosse, *Souvenirs d'un demi-siècle*, Vol. VI; Paris, Dumont, 1836, in-8. (B.N. La³⁸, 108.) About Lucien Bonaparte and Mme. Récamier, see p. 368 and following.

46. Adelbert de Chamisso, *Oeuvres*, 6 vols., edition Hitzig, Leipzig, Weidmann (1837-1839). (B.N. Invent. Z, 44980 to 44985.) See the letters in Vols. V. and VI. Important.

47. Mrs. Trollope, *Paris and the Parisians* in 1835; Paris, Galignani, 1836, 2 vols. in-12. (B.N. Lk⁷, 6219.) Translation by Cohen; Paris, Fournier, 1836, 3 vols. in-8. (B.N. Lk⁷, 6220.) See Letter 30 (I of original, II of translation), Letter 60 (II of original, III of translation), Letter 72 (II of original, III of translation).

48. Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, *Mes récapitulations*; Paris, Janet, third and last epoch, 1837. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 2642.) From p. 1 to 33, praise of Mme. Récamier and anecdotes.

49. Vicomte de Larochefoucauld, *Mémoires*; Paris, Allardin, 1837. (B.N. Lb⁴⁹, 14.) In Vol. I, portrait of Mme. Récamier, p. 256 and following, in praise of her, but commonplace; letter to Mme. Récamier asking her to persuade Chateaubriand to send in his resignation at the time of the conflict with Villèle, p. 391 and following. See too II, pp. 258, 285; III, p. 58; V, pp. 254 and 255. This work is badly composed, pretentious, and emphatic; we have only taken a few unimportant details from it.

50. Alex. Andryane, *Souvenirs de Genève*; Paris, Coquebert, 2 vols. in-8, 1839. On Mme. Récamier's dancing, I, p. 184 and following, p. 300.

51. *Un homme de rien* (Louis de Loménie), *Galerie des contemporains illustres*, 10 vols. in-18; Paris, René, 1840-1847. Important.

52. Sainte-Beuve, article on J. J. Ampère, February 15th, 1840, reprinted in *Portr. cont.*, II of the edition in 3 vols. (See Michaut, work quoted, p. 658.)

53. Sainte-Beuve, article on *Mme. de Rémusat* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, June 15th, 1842, reprinted in *Portr. de femmes*. This article caused a slight incident between Chateaubriand and Sainte-Beuve, in which Mme. Récamier served as intermediary. (See *Portr. de femmes*, p. 474, note 1.)

54. Michaud, Louis Gabriel, *Biogr. universelle, ancienne et moderne*, I, 1842-65, 45 vols. gr. in-8. The absolute royalism of this publication makes it somewhat untrustworthy. Mme. Récamier's biography is signed A. B—ée (A. Boullée).

55. Anonymous (Fortunat Mesuré), *Le Rivarol de 1842, dictionn. satir. des célébrités contem.*, Paris, in the *Feuilleton mensuel*, 1842, in-18. (B.N. Ln², 87.)

56. Larochefoucauld, Duc de Doudeauville, *Esquisses et portraits*; Paris, Léautéy, 1844, 3 vols. in-8. (B.N. Invent. G, 25502.) Vol. I contains a portrait of Ballanche, Vol. II a portrait of Juliette, Vol. III a portrait of Chateaubriand.

57. Louise Colet, *Poésies complétées*; Paris, Gosselin, 1844.

58. Duc d'Abrantes, *Le salon de Mme. Récamier*; Paris, Ducessois, 1844, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 17099.)

59. Sainte-Beuve, article on *Benjamin Constant et Mme. de Charrière* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, April 15th, 1844, reprinted in *Portr. litt.*, Vol. III. See note 2 of page 192. This article annoyed Mme. Récamier.

60. *Un homme de rien* (Louis de Loménie), *M. Benjamin Constant* in the *Gal. des cont. illustres*, VIII. This study expresses the opinion of the Abbaye on Constant, in reply to Sainte-Beuve's article.

61. Sainte-Beuve, *Un dernier mot sur Benjamin Constant*, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, November 1st, 1845, reprinted in *Portr. cont.*, V. Reply to the preceding study.

62. Baron de Méneval, *Souvenirs historiques*, Vol. III; Paris, Amyot, 1845, in-8. (B.N. Lb⁴⁴, 288.) Page 146 and following an ill-natured account of the circumstances leading to Mme. Récamier's exile.

63. Vicomte Walsh, *Souvenirs de cinquante ans*; Paris, at the office of the *Mode*, 1845. (B.N. La³⁸, 111.)

64. Louis de Loménie, articles on *Chateaubriand et ses Mémoires* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, from July 15th to September 1st, 1848, reprinted in *Esquisses historiques et littéraires*, 1879, in-18.

65. F. Nève, *Éloge de Ballanche*; Louvain et Paris, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 931.) The eulogy was read May 28th, 1848.

66. J. J. Ampère, *Ballanche*; Paris, René, 1848, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 929.) The copy which we consulted, belonging to M. Ch. de Loménie, contains additions in the author's handwriting.

67. V. de Laprade, *Ballanche, sa vie et ses écrits*; Lyons, Boitel, 1848, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 930.)

68. Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, published for the first time in *La Presse*, from October 21st, 1848, to July 3rd, 1850. We have consulted and quoted the edition Edmond Biré, 6 vols., Garnier. The work appeared in 12 vols., from 1849 to 1850, in-8, Penaud frères. (B.N. La³⁵, 31.) It was commenced in 1809, according to V. Giraud (article quoted, p. 649, note); in 1811, according to Biré and the other publishers. The *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, composed partly under the eyes of Mme. Récamier, were arranged and altered more than once to please her. Sainte-Beuve said in *Chateaubriand et son groupe*, II, p. 452: "Mme. Récamier, who was certainly one of his delicate friendships, was above all one of his arrangements, his supreme arrangement; so that as an artist, as a painter, as a decorator of first rank, he made up his mind, and when writing his Souvenirs he sacrificed everything to her." See too d'Haussonville, *Ma jeunesse*, p. 167 and following. About the impression produced by the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, see a letter from Alfred de Vigny in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of January 1st, 1897, pp. 93, 94. About the historical value of the work, consult A. Sorel, *Histoire et mémoires*, in *Minerva*, January 15th, 1903, p. 165. In the *Revue de Paris* of February 1st, 1903, Ant. Albalet has studied the Champion manuscript, which gives the latest edition of the *M.O.T.*

69. John Lemoinne, article of July 1st, 1849, reprinted in *Etudes critiques et biographiques*; Paris, M. Lévy, 1852, No. XIV.

70. Sarah Austin, article in *Fraser's Magazine*, translated in the *Revue britannique*, 1849, 24th vol., p. 278 and following. Very favourable.

71. Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, I, Mme. Récamier, article of November 26th, 1849. On the 29th October (?) 1849, Marceline Valmore wrote to Sainte-Beuve: "The charming and sad article on l'Abbaye-au-Bois came to me from Mme. Bascans, and no one can complain of not seeing you any more when reading you like this." (Vicomte de Lovenjoul, *Sainte-Beuve inconnu*, p. 230.)

72. F. Barrière, feuilleton in the *Journal des Débats* of December 2nd, 1849.

73. Duc de Noailles, *Éloge de Chateaubriand*, pronounced on the 6th of December, 1849; Paris, Comon, 1850. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 4080.) See pp. 64, 65.

74. Meyer's *Conversations Lexicon*, second part, V, 1850. Notice of 31 lines.

75. J. J. Ampère, *Littérature, voyages et poésies*; Paris, Didier, 1850, 2 vols. The first is entitled *Littérature et voyages*; the second, *Heures de poésie*, has been reprinted in part, Didier, 1863.

76. Sainte-Beuve, *Le Chateaubriand romanesque et amoureux*, May 27th, 1850 (*Causeries du Lundi*, II, p. 143 and following).

77. Charles Lenormant, study of the *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, published in 1850 in *Le Correspondant*, reprinted in 1874 in *Esquisse d'un Maître*. (B.N. La³⁵, 34.)

78. Antonin Rondelet, *Éloge de Mme. Récamier*, crowned by the Lyons Academy, March 18th, 1851. (*Mémoires* of this Academy, letters, new series.) Lyons, Dumoulin. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 17101.) It gives wrong dates. The letter of rectifications by Mme. Lenormant to the author should be read. This letter is dated September 16th, 1851, and appeared in the *Gazette de Lyon*.

79. Louis Cuillard, report given to the Lyons Academy; Dumoulin, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 17100.)

80. F. Z. Collombet, *Chateaubriand, sa vie et ses écrits*; Lyons and Paris, Périsse, 1851, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 4083.)

81. Sainte-Beuve, *La Harpe, anecdotes*, November 27th, 1851. (*Causeries du Lundi*, V, p. 123 and following of the 3rd edition.)

82. Lamartine, *Nouvelles confidences*, 1851, in-8. Lamartine, speaking of the salons of Paris under the Restoration, mentions those of Mme. de Staél, of the Duchesse de Duras, of the Princesse de la Trémouille, of Mme. de Broglie, etc., and omits Mme. Récamier's.

83. Ch. Monselet, *Statues et statuettes contemporaines*; Paris, Giraud et Dagneau, 1852. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 104.) Study of Mme. Récamier, p. 61 and following, reprinted in *Portraits après décès*. (See Sainte-Beuve, *Nouv. Lundis*, X, p. 72).

84. Mme. de Bawr, *Mes Souvenirs*, 2nd edition; Paris, Passard, 1853, p. 106 and following. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 1189 A.)

85. E. J. Delécluze, *Louis David, son école et son temps, Souvenirs*, 1854, in-18; Paris, Didier. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 5454.)

86. *Mme. Swetchine, sa vie et ses œuvres*, published by the Comte de Faloux, Paris, Vaton et Didier, 2 vols. in-8, 1854.

87. Sainte-Beuve, *Chateaubriand, anniversaire du Génie du christianisme*, article in the *Moniteur*, April 17th, 1854. Sainte-Beuve publishes the letter from Chateaubriand to Fontanes, communicated to him many years previously by Mme. Christine de Fontanes. Mme. de Fontanes protested, and Mme. Lenormant advised her to take legal proceedings. There was a great controversy on this subject, which has been related by G. Pailhès (*Du nouveau sur Joubert*, p. 432 and following), and which had its influence on Sainte-Beuve's attitude and criticism. Mme. Lenormant wrote to him, and Sainte-Beuve replied by a letter "in good ink," as he himself says. (See *Correspondance de Sainte-Beuve*, I, p. 263 and following). (*Causeries du Lundi*, X, p. 74 and following.)

88. Sainte-Beuve, *Début d'un cahier de notes et anecdotes*. A few pages dated December 31st, 1834, and published in the *Causeries du Lundi*, XI, p. 438 and following, in 1855 (?).

89. Stendhal, *Correspondance inédite*, 2 vols. in-18; Paris, Michel Lévy, 1855, II, p. 238. Anecdote about Mme. Récamier and Mme. Murat.

90. Edmond et Jules de Goncourt, *Histoire de la société française pendant le Directoire*, 1855, in-18.

91. Louis-Désiré Véron, *Mémoires d'un bourgeois de Paris*, 1855-56, 5 vols. in-16. See IV, p. 149 and following, and V, p. 307.

92. Ancelot, *Vie de Chateaubriand*; Paris, Garnier, 1856, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 4085.) See p. 226, p. 277 and following.

93. Villemain, *La tribune moderne, première partie, M. de Chateaubriand, sa vie, ses écrits, son influence littéraire et politique sur son temps*; Paris, Lévy, 1858, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷ 4086.) See pp. 493, 507, 521, 549, 550, 553. It appears that Villemain had seen the letters from Chateaubriand to Mme. Récamier. (See p. 549.)

94. Mme. Ancelot, *Les salons de Paris, Foyers éteints*; Paris, Tardieu, 1858. (B.N. Li³, 202.) Study on the salon of Mme. Récamier, p. 167 and following.

95. Comte de Marcellus, *Chateaubriand et son temps*; Paris, Lévy, 1859, in-8. Important. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 4089.) Many interesting observations. M. de Marcellus was present at the readings of the *Mémoires*. (See p. 443.)

96. Anonymous (Mme. Ch. Lenormant). *Souvenirs et Correspondance tirés des papiers de Mme. Récamier*, 2 vols. in-8; Paris, Lévy, 1859. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 17103.) The *Introduction* appears to be by Ch. Lenormant (see Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, XIV, p. 305). We quote this work from the sixth edition (1887), with the abridged title of *Souv. et Corr.* Guizot was consulted by Mme. Lenormant about certain difficulties in the editing of this work (*Les années de retraite de M. Guizot*, p. 146). He advised her not to give a third volume. "I very much regret," he writes, "the fifty letters taken away from M. de Chateaubriand's correspondence at Rome; they all interested me extremely" (*ibid.*, p. 160). N. Williams, in

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the preface to his *Histoire de Mme. Récamier* (see below, No. 297), mentions "an abridged translation" of this work by Miss Luyster (Boston, 1867).

97. John Lemoinne, two feuilletons in the *Journal des Débats* of October 27th and November 24th, 1859.

98. Villemain, article on the *Souv. et Corr.* in *Le Correspondant*, 1859.

99. G. Vattier, article on the *Souv. et Corr.* in the *Correspondance littéraire* of December 25th, 1859.

100. Sainte-Beuve, notice on November 28th, 1859, on the *Souv. et Corr.*, reprinted in the *Causeries du Lundi*, XIV. The two articles, the one of 1849 and the one of 1859, "are master-pieces, the first more particularly, but they are two panegyrics." (Jules Soury, *Portr. de femmes*, p. 302.)

101. Guizot, article on *Mme. Récamier* in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, December 1st, 1859.

102. A. de Pontmartin, article on *Mme. Récamier*, 1859 (?), reprinted in *Dernières causeries du samedi*, 2nd edition; Paris, Lévy, 1866.

103. A. v. Humboldt, *Correspondance avec Varnhagen*, translation, Sulzberger; Brussels, 1860, in-18. In this collection, p. 207, the letter from *Mme. Récamier* to Humboldt will be found, on the death of Prince Augustus.

104. Lamartine, *Cours familier de littérature*, Vol. IX; Paris, 1860, in-8. 240 pages on the *Souv. et Corr.* It is a magnificent piece of verbiage.

105. Sainte-Beuve, *Chateaubriand et son groupe littéraire sous l'Empire*; Paris, Garnier, 1860, 2 vols. in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 4090.) With regard to this much-discussed work, we are of the same opinion as C. Latreille (*Sainte-Beuve et Chateaubriand*, *Minerva*, December 1st, 1902, p. 393 and following.). In giving these lectures Sainte-Beuve freed himself from the feminine influences which had hitherto modified his ideas, but he remained sincere and moderate.

106. *Edinburgh Review*, 1860, Vol. CXI, from p. 204 to p. 236, article on the *Souvenirs et Correspondance*.

107. *Quarterly Review*, 1860, Vol. CVII, No. 214, April, from p. 298 to p. 324, articles on the *Souvenirs et Correspondance*.

108. Léopold Monty, *Le salon de Mme. Récamier*, article in the *Revue européenne*, Vol. VII, Paris, 1860, from p. 111 to p. 142.

109. Comte Joseph d'Estournel, *Derniers souvenirs*; Paris, Dentu, 1860. (B.N. Lb³², 72.) About the last days of Chateaubriand and the last of the Abbaye receptions, p. 6 and following, p. 17 and following, p. 143 and following, p. 155, p. 239 and following, p. 289 and following. Very interesting.

110. Comte Clément de Ris. Article on the *Souv. et Corr.* in the *Bulletin du bibliophile et du biblioth.*, 1860, p. 1193 and following.

111. Louis de Loménie. Two articles on *Chateaubriand et la critique* in *Le Correspondant* of September and October 1861, reprinted in *Esquisses hist. et litt.* Important.

112. Louis Lacour, *Grand monde et salons politiques de Paris après la Terreur*; Paris, Claudin, 1861. See from p. 76 to p. 82.

113. Alexis de Toqueville, *Ouvres et corr. inédites*, II; Paris, Lévy, 1861, in-8. A few pleasant words for *Mme. Récamier* in a letter to J. J. Ampère, July 5th, 1841 (p. 115).

114. Anonymous (*Mme. Lenormant*), *Coppet et Weimar, Mme. de Staël et la Grande Duchesse Louise*; Paris, Lévy, 1862, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 19166.)

115. E. J. Delécluze, *Souvenirs de soixante années*; Paris, Lévy, 1862, in-18. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 5647.) Important. Sainte-Beuve, in a letter to Delécluze (*Corresp.* I, pp. 296 and 297), congratulates him for having dared to show Ballanche's face "on the scarred side."

116. J. J. Coulmann, *Réminiscences*, Vol. I.; Paris, Lévy, 1862, in-8. Vol. II., 1865; Vol. III., 1869. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 4990.) See on this work an article by Sainte-Beuve in *Nouv. Lundis*, Vol. IX.

117. Mme. M . . . (Mohl), *Mme. Récamier, with a sketch of the history of society in France, by . . .*; London, Chapman and Hall, 1862. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 28540.) See on this book Sainte-Beuve, *Portr. cont.*, II, p. 50, and O'Meara, *Un salon à Paris*, p. 145 and following. Important.

118. E. Texier, notice on *Mme. Récamier* in *Les Reines du monde . . .*; Paris, Lahure, 1862. (B.N. Inv. G., 1456). Unimportant.

119. Mme. Swetchine, *Lettres*, published by the Comte de Falloux, 2 vols. in-8; Paris, Didier, 1862.

120. Article by E. Crépet in the *Nouvelle Biographie générale*, Firmin Didot frères, Vol. 41; Paris, 1862. A careless study, full of errors.

121. Sainte-Beuve, two articles on *Coppet et Weimar*, May 5th and 12th, 1862, reprinted in the *Nouv. Lundis*, edition C. Lévy, II.

122. Sainte-Beuve, *Benjamin Constant . . .*, January 27th, 1862, reprinted in *Nouveaux Lundis*, edition C. Lévy, I. It is in this that Sainte-Beuve attributes distinctly to Mme. Récamier's influence the article of March 19th, 1815. This study marks a very curious change in Sainte-Beuve's opinion of Mme. Récamier, whom he now calls a "coquette," p. 425.

123. Sainte-Beuve, two articles on *Etienne-Jean Delécluze*, August 11th and 18th, 1862, reprinted in the *Nouv. Lundis*, edition C. Lévy, III.

124. Sainte-Beuve, articles on *Les entretiens de Goethe et d'Eckermann*, October 13th, 1862, reprinted in *Nouv. Lundis*, edition C. Levy, III. On Ampère's visit to Weimar and the letter of May 9th, 1826, to Mme. Récamier, p. 307 and following.

125. Pierre Leroux, *La grève de Samarez*; Paris, Dentu, 1863. (B.N. Inv. R, 41677.) Account of a dinner at which Ballanche tells Leroux about his first interview with Mme. R., I, p. 204 and following.

126. Sismondi, *Lettres inédites à Mme. la Comtesse d'Albany*; Paris, Lévy, 1863, in-18. See p. 301.

127. Mme. Victor Hugo, *Victor Hugo raconté par un témoin de sa vie*, II, 1863, in-8.

128. Arsène Houssaye, *Les femmes du temps passé*; Paris, Morizot, 1865. A study of Mme. Récamier, from p. 423 to p. 438.

129. A. Boullée, *Biographies contemporaines*, II; Paris, Vaton, 1863. Notice on Mme. Récamier, fairly exact, from p. 421 to p. 437. Published separately, Paris, Plon, in-8. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 1863.)

130. J. Daniels, *Les Conversations de M. de Chateaubriand*; Paris, Dentu, 1864. (B.N. Ln²⁷, 21262.)

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